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THE GOLDEN DAWN READERS

EDITED BY
ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES, M.A.
Litt.D. (Hon.), Trinity College, Dublin
LATE ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS

BOOK IV



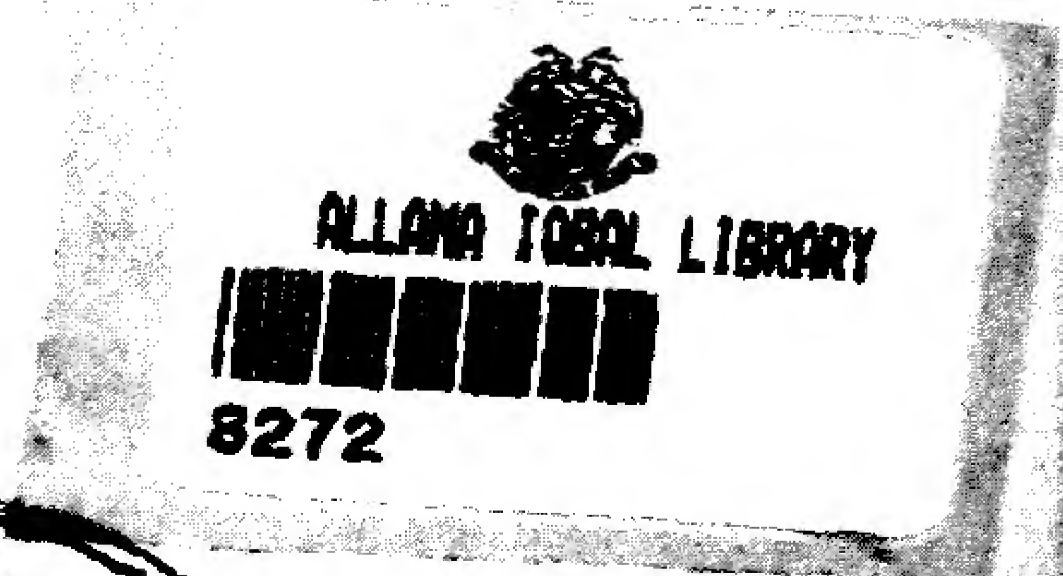
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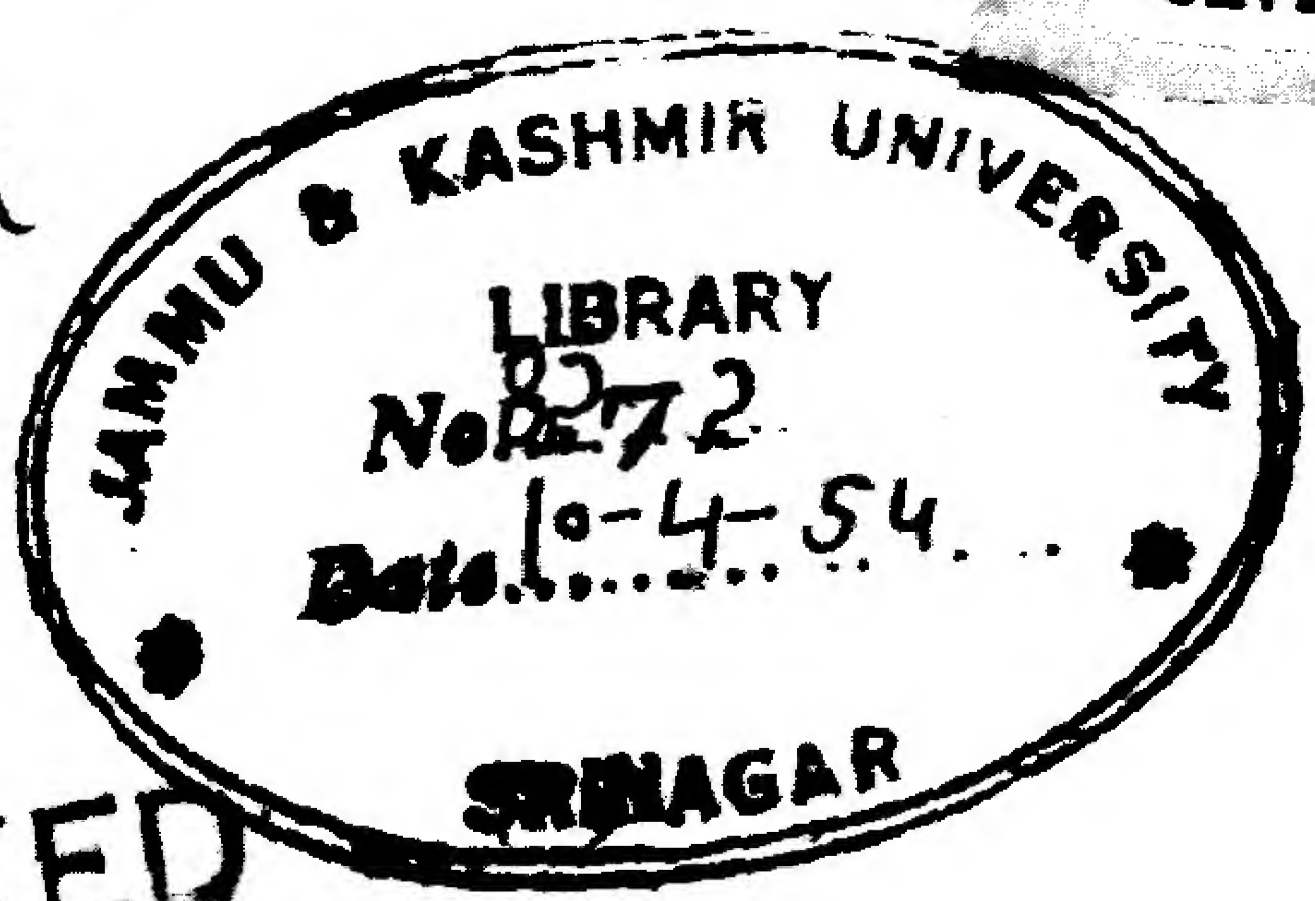
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE GOLDEN KEY—Part I.	7
" " " " II.	11
" " " " III.	17
" " " " IV.	23
" " " " V.	28
" " " " VI.	32
" " " " VII.	37
" " " " VIII.	41
SPRING	46
OLD COUNTRY SONGS	46
SANDY AND THE "SEA OSTRICH"—Part I.	49
" " " " II.	52
" " " " III.	59
" " " " IV.	62
THE POETRY OF EARTH	67
THE SYLVAN LIFE	67
BRAVE DEEDS—Part I.	68
" " " " II.	73
" " " " III.	78
" " " " IV.	80
LONDON FROM WESTMINSTER BRIDGE	82
THE LEGEND OF KNOCKGRAFTON.—Part I.	83
" " " " II.	86
" " " " III.	89
THE ENGLISH BOY	93
ADVENTURES IN NORTH RUSSIA—Part I.	95
" " " " II.	101
" " " " III.	107
" " " " IV.	111
" " " " V.	115
COLA MONTI—Part I.	120
" " " " II.	127
" " " " III.	132
" " " " IV.	136
" " " " V.	141
" " " " VI.	146
THE CRUISE OF THE "TIGER"	151
STATION JIM'S CAREER	153
A RED-SKIN TRAITOR CHASE—Part I.	156
" " " " II.	162
" " " " III.	167
" " " " IV.	171
" " " " V.	177
THE ARAB TO HIS STEED	180
FIELD AND WILD—Part I.	183
" " " " II.	189
" " " " III.	194
THE SEA-CAVE	199
IN THE SARGASSO SEA—Part I.	200
" " " " II.	205
" " " " III.	210
" " " " IV.	214
" " " " V.	219
" " " " VI.	222



IN THE FIELD—A GLEANER RESTING.
(From the picture by P. F. Peole, R.A.)

THE GOLDEN DAWN READERS

BOOK IV

THE GOLDEN KEY.

PART I.

THERE was a boy who used to sit in the twilight, and listen to his great-aunt's stories.

She told him that if he could reach the place where the end of the rainbow stands, he would find a golden key there.

"And what is the key for?" the boy would ask. "What will it open?"

"That nobody knows," his aunt would reply. "He has to find that out."

"I suppose, being gold," the boy once said thoughtfully, "that I could get a good deal of money for it, if I sold it."

"Better never find it than sell it," returned his aunt.

And then the boy went to bed and dreamed about the golden key.

One evening, in summer, he went into his own room, and stood at the lattice-window and gazed into the forest, which fringed the outskirts of Fairyland.

Suddenly, far among the trees, as far as the sun could shine, he saw a glorious thing. It was the end of a rainbow, large and brilliant. He could count all the seven colours, and could see shade after shade beyond the violet; while before the red stood a colour more gorgeous and mysterious still. It was a colour he had never seen before.

"The golden key!" he said to himself, and darted out of the house, and into the wood.

He had not gone far before the sun set. But the rainbow only glowed the brighter. The bushes made way for him. The rainbow grew larger and brighter; and at length he found himself within two trees of it.

He stood gazing at it till he forgot himself with delight; he even forgot the key which he had come to seek. And as he stood, it grew more wonderful still. For in each of the colours, which was as large as the column of a church, he could faintly see beautiful forms slowly rising.

Meantime it had grown quite dark in the wood. The rainbow alone could be seen. But the moment the moon rose, the rainbow vanished. So he threw himself down on a mossy bed, to wait till

the sunlight would give him a chance of finding the key. There he fell fast asleep.

When he woke in the morning, the sun was looking straight into his eyes. He turned away from it, and the same moment saw a brilliant thing lying on the moss, within a foot of his face. It was the golden key. It was of plain gold, as bright as gold could be, and the handle was curiously set with sapphires. In a terror of delight he put out his hand and took it, and so he had it.

Then he jumped to his feet, remembering that the pretty thing was of no use to him yet. Where was the lock to which the key belonged? Where should he go to look for it? He gazed about him, up into the air, down to the earth, but saw no key-hole in the clouds, in the grass, or in the trees.

Just as he began to grow sad, however, he saw something glimmering in the wood, and went towards it. And now I will go back to the borders of the forest.

Not far from the house where the boy had lived, there was another house, the owner of which was a merchant, who was much away from home. He had lost his wife some years before, and had only one child, a little girl, whom he had left to the charge of two servants, who were very idle and careless. So she was neglected and left untidy.



"HE SAW A BRILLIANT THING LYING IN THE MOES. IT WAS
THE GOLDEN KEY."

But the fairies hate untidy people, and they determined to get rid of the child.

One evening, the poor little girl having been put to bed early, before the sun was down, the servants went off to the village, locking the door behind them. The child did not know she was alone, and lay contentedly looking out of her window towards the forest.

But the fairies knew that she had been reading the story of Silver-hair all day. So the next moment she heard the voices of the three bears upon the stair, big voice, middle voice, and little voice, and she heard their soft, heavy tread as if they had stockings over their boots, coming nearer and nearer to the door of her room, till she could bear it no longer. She did just as Silver-hair did, and as the fairies wanted her to do : she darted to the window, pulled it open, got upon the ivy, and so scrambled to the ground. She then fled to the forest as fast as she could run.

THE GOLDEN KEY

PART II.

THE sun was now set, and the darkness coming on, but the child thought of no danger but the bears behind her.

After running a long way, she came to a cottage

with a bright fire in the middle of the floor. A beautiful woman rose from the opposite side of the fire, and came to meet the girl. She took her up in her arms, and said, "Ah, you are come at last! I have been looking for you a long time."

She sat down with her on her lap, and there the girl sat staring at her. She had never seen anything so beautiful. She was tall and strong, with white arms and neck, and a delicate flush on her face, and she was dressed in shining green.

"What is your name?" asked the lady.

"The servants always called me Tangle."

"Ah! that was because your hair was so untidy. But that was their fault. Still, it is a pretty name, and I will call you Tangle, too."

And her great blue eyes looked down on the little Tangle, as if all the stars in the sky were melted in them to make their brightness.

"What is your name, please?" asked Tangle.

"Grandmother," answered the lady. And she smiled like the sun through a summer shower.

"But now," she went on, "I must get you washed and dressed, and then we shall have some supper."

"Oh! I had supper long ago," said Tangle.

"Yes, indeed you had," answered the lady, "three years ago. You don't know that it is

three years since you ran away from the bears. You are thirteen and more now."

Tangle could only stare. She felt quite sure it was true.

"You will not be afraid of anything I do with you, will you?" said the lady.

"I will try very hard not to be; but I can't be certain, you know," replied Tangle.

"I like your saying so, and I shall be quite satisfied," answered the lady.

Then the lady rose with her in her arms, and going to the wall of the cottage, opened a door. Then Tangle saw a deep tank filled with beautiful clear water, in which swam many strange fishes of all colours, and with wonderful white wings.

The lady spoke some words Tangle could not understand, and threw her into the water.

The fishes came crowding about her. Two or three of them got under her head, and kept it up. The rest of them rubbed themselves all over her, and with their wet feathers washed her quite clean.

Then the lady carried her back to the fire, and, having dried her well, opened a chest, and taking out the finest linen garments, smelling of grass and lavender, put them upon her, and over all a green dress, just like her own, shining like hers, and going into just such lovely folds from the

waist, where it was tied with a brown cord, to her bare feet.

After they had had supper, the lady told Tangle it was time to go to bed; and opening another door in the side of the cottage, showed her a little arbour, cool and green, with a bed of purple heath growing in it. Tangle lay down and was soon lost in the strangest, loveliest dreams.

In the morning she woke to the rustling of leaves over her head, and the sound of running water, and entering the cottage, she found the beautiful lady sitting beside the fire.

She took Tangle on her knee, and began to sing to her—such songs as made her wish she could listen to them for ever. But, at length, in rushed a youth who had outgrown his worn garments. His face was ruddy with health, and in his hand he carried a little jewel, which sparkled in the firelight. The first words the lady said were, “What is that in your hand, Mossy?” For that was his name. Mossy held out his hand, and the lady saw that it was the golden key. “Will you tell me what to do with it?” he said.

“You must look for the key-hole. That is your work. I cannot help you. I can only tell you that if you look for it, you will find it.”



“SHE WAVED HER HAND EASTWARD, AND MOSSY AND TANGLE
WALKED AWAY INTO THE DEPTH OF THE FOREST.”

“What kind of a box will it open? What is there inside?”

“I do not know. I dream about it, but I know nothing.”

“Must I go at once?”

“You may stop here to-night, but you must go in the morning. Here is a girl called Tangle, whom you will take with you.”

“That will be nice,” said Mossy.

“No, no!” said Tangle. “I don’t want to leave you, please, grandmother.”

“You must go with him, Tangle. I am sorry to lose you, but it will be the best thing for you.”

But Tangle was very unwilling to go. “Why should I leave you? I don’t know the young man,” she said to the lady.

“I am never allowed to keep my children long. You need not go with him, except you please, but I should like you to, for he has found the golden key. You will take care of her, Mossy. will you not?”

“That I will,” said Mossy.

And Tangle cast a glance at him, and thought she should like to go with him. “And,” said the lady, “if you should lose each other, do not be afraid, but go on and on.”

She kissed Tangle on the mouth, and Mossy

on the forehead, led them to the door, and waved her hand eastward. Mossy and Tangle took each other by the hand, and walked away into the depth of the forest. In his right hand Mossy held the golden key.

THE GOLDEN KEY.

PART III.

Mossy and Tangle wandered thus a long way, and at last they came out upon a narrow path on the face of a lofty precipice. This path went winding down the rock to a wide plain. An utter silence reigned where they stood. Not even the sound of water reached them.

Looking down, they could not tell whether the valley below was a grassy plain, or a great still lake. The way to it was difficult and dangerous, but down the narrow path they went, and reached the bottom in safety. It was no wonder to them now that they had not been able to tell what it was, for this surface was everywhere crowded with shadows.

It was a sea of shadows. The mass was chiefly made up of the shadows of many leaves. They soon spied the shadows of flowers, mingled with those of the leaves, and now and then the shadow

of birds. As they walked they waded knee-deep in the lovely lake.

Tangle and Mossy often lifted their heads, and gazed upwards to see whence the shadows came; but they could see nothing more than a bright mist spread above them, higher than the tops of the mountains, which stood clear against it. No forests, no leaves, no birds were visible.

After a while, they reached more open spaces, where the shadows were thinner. About the middle of the plain, they sat down to rest in the heart of a heap of shadows. After sitting for a while, each, looking up, saw the other in tears: they were both longing after the country whence the shadows fell.

"We must find the country from which the shadows come," said Mossy.

"We must, dear Mossy," responded Tangle. "What if your golden key should be the key to it?"

"Ah! that would be grand," returned Mossy. "But we must rest here for a little, and then we shall be able to cross the plain before night."

He lay down on the ground, and about him on every side, and over his head, was the constant play of the wonderful shadows. He could look through them, and see the one behind the other, till they mixed in a mass of darkness. Tangle,



"AS THEY WALKED, THEY WADED KNEE DEEP IN THE
LOVELY LAKE."



TANGLE WAS GUIDED THROUGH THE CAVE BY A FLYING FISH,
WHOSE WINGS THREW OFF A SHOWER OF STARKS

too, lay admiring, and wondering, and longing after the country whence the shadows came. When they were rested, they rose and pursued their journey.

How long they were in crossing this plain I cannot tell; but before night Mossy's hair was streaked with grey, and Tangle had got wrinkles on her forehead.

As evening drew on, the shadows fell deeper and rose higher. At length they reached a place where they rose above their heads, and made all dark around them. Then each took hold of the other's hand, and walked on in silence, and in some dismay.

They felt the gathering darkness, and something strangely solemn besides, and the beauty of the shadows ceased to delight them. All at once Tangle found that she had not a hold of Mossy's hand, though when she lost it she could not tell.

"Mossy, Mossy!" she cried aloud in terror.

But no Mossy replied.

A moment after, the shadows sank to her feet, and down under her feet, and the mountains rose before her. She turned towards the gloomy region she had left, and called once more upon Mossy. There the gloom lay tossing and heaving, a dark, stormy, foamless sea of shadows,

but no Mossy rose out of it, or came climbing up the hill on which she stood. She threw herself down, and wept in despair.

Suddenly she remembered that the beautiful lady had told them, if they lost each other in a country of which she could not remember the name, they were not to be afraid, but to go straight on.

"And besides," she said to herself, "Mossy has the golden key, and so no harm will come to him, I do believe."

She rose from the ground, and went on. Before long she arrived at a precipice, in the face of which a stair was cut. When she had ascended half-way, the stair ceased, and the path led straight into the mountain.

She was afraid to enter, and turning again towards the stair, grew giddy at sight of the depth beneath her, and was forced to throw herself down in the mouth of the cave.

When she opened her eyes, she saw a beautiful little creature with wings standing beside her, waiting. "I know you," said Tangle. "You are one of grandmother's flying fishes."

"Yes, and I am come to lead you through the mountain."

Thereupon he took to his wings, and flew on through the long, narrow passage. And the

moment his white wings moved, they began to throw off a continuous shower of sparks of all colours, which lighted up the passage before them.

All at once he vanished, and Tangle heard a low, sweet sound, quite different from the rush and crackle of his wings. Before her was an open arch, and through it came light, mixed with the sound of sea waves.

She hurried out, and fell, tired and happy, upon the yellow sand of the shore. There she lay, half asleep with weariness and rest, listening to the low plash and retreat of the tiny waves, which seemed ever enticing the land to leave off being land, and become sea.

As she lay, her eyes were fixed upon the foot of a great rainbow, standing far away against the sky on the other side of the sea. At length she fell fast asleep.

THE GOLDEN KEY.

PART IV.

When Tangle awoke, she saw an old man with long white hair down to his shoulders, leaning upon a stick covered with green buds, and so bending over her.

“What do you want here, beautiful woman?” he said.

"Am I beautiful? I am so glad!" answered Tangle, rising. "My grandmother is beautiful."

"Yes. But what do you want?" he repeated kindly.

"I think I want you. Are not you the Old Man of the Sea?"

"I am."

"Then grandmother says, have you any more fishes ready for her?"

"We will go and see, my dear," answered the Old Man, speaking yet more kindly than before. "And I can do something for you, can I not?"

"Yes. Show me the way up to the country from which the shadows fall," said Tangle. For there she hoped to find Mossy again.

"Ah! indeed, that would be worth doing," said the Old Man. "But I cannot, for I do not know the way myself. But I will send you to the Old Man of the Earth. Perhaps he can tell you. He is much older than I am."

Leaning on his staff, he conducted her along the shore to a steep rock, that looked like a ship turned upside down. Ages ago the door of it was the rudder of a great vessel at the bottom of the sea. Immediately within the door was a stair in the rock, down which the Old Man went and Tangle followed. At the bottom the Old Man had his house, and there he lived.



"PEEPING THROUGH THE WINDOW, TANGLE SAW THE MOST
CURIOUS CREATURES"

As soon as she entered it, Tangle heard a strange noise, unlike anything she had ever heard before. She soon found that it was the fishes talking. She tried to understand what they said; but their speech was so old-fashioned and rude, that she could not make much of it.

"I will go and see about those fishes for my daughter," said the Old Man of the Sea. And moving a slide in the wall of his house, he first looked out, and then tapped upon a thick piece of crystal that filled the round opening.

Tangle came up behind him, and peeping through the window into the heart of the great deep green ocean, saw the most curious creatures, some very ugly, all very odd, and with especially queer mouths, swimming about everywhere, above and below, but all coming towards the window in answer to the tap of the Old Man of the Sea.

Only a few could get their mouths against the glass; but those who were floating miles away yet turned their heads towards it. The Old Man looked through the whole flock carefully for some minutes, and then turning to Tangle, said, "I am sorry I have not got one ready yet. I want more time than she does. But I will send some as soon as I can."

He then shut the slide. Presently a great noise arose in the sea. The Old Man opened the slide

again, and tapped on the glass, whereupon the fishes were all as still as sleep.

"They were only talking about you," he said. "And they do speak such nonsense! Tomorrow," he continued, "I must show you the way to the Old Man of the Earth. He lives a long way from here."

"Do let me go at once," said Tangle.

"No. That is not possible. You must come this way first."

He led her to a hole in the wall, which she had not observed before. It was covered with the green leaves and white blossoms of a creeping plant.

"Only white-blossoming plants can grow under the sea," said the Old Man. "In there you will find a bath, in which you must lie till I call you."

Tangle went in, and found a smaller room or cave, in the further corner of which was a great basin, hollowed out of a rock, and half-full of the clearest sea water. Little streams were constantly running into it from cracks in the wall of the cavern.

It was polished quite smooth inside, and had a carpet of yellow sand in the bottom of it. Large green leaves and white flowers of various plants crowded up over it, draping and covering it almost entirely.

No sooner was she undressed and lying in the bath, than she began to feel as if the water were sinking into her, and she were receiving all the good of sleep without undergoing its forgetfulness.

She felt the good coming all the time. And she grew happier and more hopeful than she had been since she lost Mossy. But she could not help thinking how very sad it was for a poor old man to live there all alone, and have to take care of a whole sea-ful of stupid and riotous fishes.

After about an hour, as she thought, she heard his voice calling her, and rose out of the bath. All the fatigue and aching of her long journey had vanished. She was as whole, and strong, and well as if she had slept for seven days.

THE GOLDEN KEY.

PART V.

When Tangle returned, after her bath, to the opening that led into the other part of the house, she started back with surprise, for through it she saw the form of a grand man, with a grand and beautiful face, waiting for her.

"Come," he said, "I see you are ready."

She entered with reverence. "Where is the Old Man of the Sea?" she asked humbly.

“There is no one here but me,” he answered, smiling. “Some people call me the Old Man of the Sea. Others have another name for me, and are frightened when they meet me taking a walk by the shore. You see me now. But I must show you the way to the Old Man of the Earth.”

He led her into the cave where the bath was, and there she saw, in the opposite corner, a second opening in the rock. “Go down that stair, and it will bring you to him,” said the Old Man of the Sea.

With humble thanks Tangle took her leave. She went down the winding stair, till she began to fear there was no end to it. Still down and down it went, rough and broken, with springs of water bursting out of the rocks and running down the steps beside her.

It was quite dark about her, and yet she could see. For after being in that bath, people’s eyes always give out a light they can see by. There were no creeping things in the way. All was safe and pleasant, though so dark and damp and deep.

At last there was not one step more, and she found herself in a glimmering cave. On a stone in the middle of it sat a figure with its back towards her—the figure of an old man bent double with age. From behind she could see his

white beard spread out on the rocky floor in front of him. He did not move as she entered; so she passed round, that she might stand before him and speak to him.

The moment she looked in his face, she saw that he was a youth of marvellous beauty. He sat entranced with the delight of what he beheld in a mirror of something like silver, which lay on the floor at his feet, and which from behind she had taken for his white beard. He sat on, heedless of her presence, pale with the joy of his vision.

She stood and watched him. At length, all trembling, she spoke. But her voice made no sound. Yet the youth lifted up his head. He showed no surprise, however, at seeing her, but only smiled a welcome.

"Are you the Old Man of the Earth?" Tangle had said.

And the youth answered, and Tangle heard him, though not with her ears, "I am. What can I do for you?"

"Tell me the way to the country whence the shadows fall."

"Ah! that I do not know. I only dream about it myself. I see its shadows sometimes in my mirror: the way to it I do not know. But I think the Old Man of the Fire must know. He

is much older than I am. He is the oldest man of all."

"Where does he live?"

"I will show you the way to his place. I never saw him myself."

So saying, the young man rose, and then stood a while gazing at Tangle. "I wish I could see that country too," he said. "But I must mind my work."

He led her to the side of the cave, and told her to lay her ear against the wall. "What do you hear?" he asked.

"I hear," answered Tangle, "the sound of a great water running inside the rock."

"That river runs down to the dwelling of the oldest man of all, the Old Man of the Fire. I wish I could go to see him. But I must mind my work. That river is the only way to him."

Then the Old Man of the Earth stooped over the floor of the cave, raised a huge stone from it, and left it leaning. It disclosed a great hole that went plumb down.

"That is the way," he said.

"But there are no stairs."

"You must throw yourself in. There is no other way."

She turned and looked him full in the face, and then threw herself headlong into the hole.

THE GOLDEN KEY.

PART VI.

When Tangle came to herself, she found herself gliding down fast and deep. Her head was under water, but that did not matter; for, when she thought about it, she could not remember that she had breathed once since her bath in the cave of the Old Man of the Sea. When she lifted up her head, a sudden and fierce heat struck her, and she dropped it again instantly, and went sweeping on.

Gradually the stream grew shallower. At length she could hardly keep her head under. Then the water could carry her no farther. She rose from the channel, and went step by step down the burning descent.

The water ceased altogether, and the heat was now terrible. She felt scorched to the bone, but it did not touch her strength. It grew hotter and hotter. She said, "I can bear it no longer." Yet she went on.

At the long last, the stair ended at a rude archway in an all but glowing rock. Through this archway Tangle fell exhausted into a cool mossy cave. The floor and walls were covered with moss—green, soft, and damp. A little



"SHE SAW, IN A CORNER OF THE CAVE, A LITTLE CHILD
SITTING ON THE MOSS."

stream spouted from a rent in the rock, and fell into a basin of moss. She plunged her face into it and drank.

She lifted her head and looked around. Then she rose and looked again. She saw no one in the cave. But the moment she stood upright, she had a marvellous sense that she was in the secret of the earth and all its ways.

Everything she had seen, or learned from books; all that her grandmother had said or sung to her; all the talk of the beasts, birds, and fishes; all that had happened to her on her journey with Mossy, and since then in the heart of the earth with the Old Man and the Older Man—all was plain; she understood it all, and saw that everything meant the same thing, though she could not have put it into words again.

The next moment she saw, in a corner of the cave, a little child sitting on the moss. He was playing with balls of various colours and sizes, which he arranged in strange patterns upon the floor beside him. She stood looking for a long time, for there was a great attraction in the sight.

At last she spoke. "Where is the Old Man of the Fire?" she said.

"Here I am," answered the child, rising and leaving his balls on the moss. "What can I do for you?"

There was such a wonderfully calm look on the face of the child that Tangle stood dumb before him. He had no smile, but the love in his large grey eyes was deep as the centre. And with the repose there lay on his face a shimmer as of moonlight, which seemed as if any moment it might break into a delightful smile.

But the smile never came, and the moonlight lay there unbroken. For the heart of the child was too deep for any smile to reach from it to his face.

"Are you the oldest man of all?" Tangle at length, although filled with awe, ventured to ask.

"Yes, I am. I am very, very old. I am able to help you, I know. I can help everybody."

And the child drew near, and looked up in her face, so that she burst into tears. "Can you tell me the way to the country the shadows fall from?" she sobbed.

"Yes. I know the way quite well. I go there myself sometimes. But you could not go my way; you are not old enough. I will show you how you can go."

"Do not send me out into the great heat again," prayed Tangle.

"I will not," answered the child. And he reached up, and put his little cool hand on her heart.

"Now," he said, "you can go. The fire will not burn you. Come."

He led her from the cave, and following him through another archway, she found herself in a vast desert of sand and rock. The sky of it was of rock, lowering over them like solid thunder-clouds; and the whole place was so hot that she saw, in bright rivulets, the yellow gold, and white silver, and red copper trickling molten from the rocks. But the heat never came near her.

When they had gone some distance, the child turned up a great stone, and took something like an egg from under it. He next drew a long curved line in the sand with his finger, and laid the egg in it.

He then spoke something Tangle could not understand. The egg broke; a small snake came out, and, lying in the line in the sand, grew and grew till he filled it. The moment he was thus full grown, he began to glide away, curving like a sea wave.

"Follow that serpent," said the child. "He will lead you the right way."

Tangle followed the serpent. But she could not go far without looking back at the marvellous child. He stood alone in the midst of the glowing desert, beside a fountain of red flame that had

burst forth at his feet, his naked whiteness glimmering a pale rosy red in the torrid fire.

There he stood, looking after her, till, from the lengthening distance, she could see him no more. The serpent went straight on, turning neither to the right nor left.

THE GOLDEN KEY.

PART VII.

Meantime, Mossy had got out of the lake of shadows, and, following his mournful, lonely way, had reached the sea-shore. It was a dark, stormy evening. The sun had set. The wind was blowing from the sea. The waves had surrounded the rock within which lay the Old Man's house. A deep water rolled between it and the shore, upon which a majestic figure was walking alone.

Mossy went up to him and said, "Will you tell me where to find the Old Man of the Sea?"

"I am the Old Man of the Sea," the figure answered.

"I see a strong kingly man of middle age," returned Mossy.

Then the Old Man looked at him more intently and said, "Your sight, young man, is better than that of most who take this way. The night is

stormy: come to my house and tell me what I can do for you."

Mossy followed him. The waves flew from before the footsteps of the Old Man of the Sea, and Mossy followed upon dry sand. When they had reached the cave, they sat down and gazed at each other.

Now Mossy was an old man by this time. He looked much older than the Old Man of the Sea, and his feet were very weary.

After looking at him for a moment, the Old Man took him by the hand, and led him into his inner cave. There he helped him to undress, and laid him in the bath. And he saw that one of his hands Mossy did not open.

"What have you in that hand?" he asked.

Mossy opened his hand, and there lay the golden key. "Ah!" said the Old Man, "that accounts for your knowing me. And I know the way you have to go."

"I want to find the country whence the shadows fall," said Mossy.

"I dare say you do. So do I. But meantime, one thing is certain. What is that key for, do you think?"

"For a key-hole somewhere. But I don't know why I keep it. I never could find the key-hole. And I have lived a good while, I believe," said



“THIS INDEED IS MY WAY,” SAID MOSSY, AS SOON AS HE SAW
THE RAINBOW.”

Mossy sadly. "I'm not sure that I'm not old, I know my feet ache."

"Do they?" said the Old Man, as if he really meant to ask the question; and Mossy, who was still lying in the bath, watched his feet for a moment before he replied.

"No, they do not," he answered. "Perhaps I am not old either."

"Get up and look at yourself in the water."

He rose and looked at himself in the water, and there was not a grey hair on his head, or a wrinkle on his skin.

They returned to the outer cave, and sat and talked together for a long time. At length the Old Man of the Sea arose and said to Mossy, "Follow me."

He led him up the stair again, and opened another door. They stood on the level of the raging sea, looking towards the east. Across the waste of waters, against the bosom of a fierce black cloud, stood the foot of a rainbow, glowing in the dark.

"This indeed is my way," said Mossy, as soon as he saw the rainbow, and stepped out upon the sea. His feet made no holes in the water. He fought the wind, and climbed the waves, and went on towards the rainbow.

The storm died away. A lovely day and a

lovelier night followed. A cool wind blew over the wide plain of the quiet ocean. And still Mossy journeyed eastward. But the rainbow had vanished with the storm.

THE GOLDEN KEY.

PART VIII.

Day after day Mossy held on, and he thought he had no guide. He did not see how a shining fish under the waters directed his steps. He crossed the sea, and came to a great precipice of rock, up which he could discover but one path. Nor did this lead him farther than half-way up the rock, where it ended on a platform.

Here he stood and pondered. It could not be that the way stopped here, else what was the path for? It was a rough path, not very plain, yet certainly a path.

He examined the face of the rock. It was smooth as glass. But as his eyes kept roving hopelessly over it, something glittered, and he caught sight of a row of small sapphires. They bordered a little hole in the rock.

“The key-hole!” he cried.

He tried the key. It fitted. It turned. A great clang and clash echoed within. He drew out the key. The rock in front of him began

to fall. He retreated from it as far as the breadth of the platform would allow. A great slab fell at his feet.

In front was still the solid rock, with this one slab fallen forward out of it. But the moment he stepped upon it a second fell, just short of the edge of the first, making the next step of a stair, which thus kept dropping itself before him as he ascended into the heart of the precipice.

The staircase led him into a hall fit for such an approach, irregular and roughly made, but floor, sides, pillars, and rounded roof all one mass of shining stones of every colour that light can show.

In the centre stood seven columns, ranged from red to violet. And at the foot of one of them sat a woman, motionless, with her face bowed upon her knees. Seven years had she sat there waiting.

She lifted her head as Mossy drew near. It was Tangle. Her hair had grown to her feet, and was rippled like the sea on broad sands. Her face was beautiful, like her grandmother's, and as still and peaceful as that of the Old Man of the Fire. Her form was tall and noble. Yet Mossy knew her at once.

"How beautiful you are, Tangle!" he said, in delight and astonishment.

“Am I?” she returned. “Oh, I have waited for you so long! But you, you are like the Old Man of the Sea. No. You are like the Old Man of the Earth. No, no. You are like the oldest man of all. You are like them all. And yet you are my own old Mossy! How did you come here? What did you do after I lost you? Did you find the key-hole? Have you got the key still?”

She had a hundred questions to ask him, and he had a hundred more to ask her. They told each other all their adventures, and were as happy as man and woman could be. For they were younger and better, and stronger and wiser than they had ever been before.

It began to grow dark. And they wanted more than ever to reach the country whence the shadows fall. So they looked about them for a way out of the cave. The door by which Mossy entered had closed again, and there was half a mile of rock between them and the sea.

Neither could Tangle find the opening in the floor by which the serpent had led her thither. They searched till it grew so dark that they could see nothing, and gave it up.

After a while, however, the cave began to glimmer again. The light came from the moon, but it did not look like moonlight, for it gleamed



"THEY CLIMBED OUT OF THE EARTH. THEY WERE IN THE
RAINBOW."

through those seven pillars in the middle, and filled the place with all colours.

Mossy now saw that there was a pillar beside the red one, which he had not observed before. And it was of the same new colour that he had seen in the rainbow, when he saw it first in the fairy forest. And on it he saw a sparkle of blue. It was the sapphires round the key-hole.

He took his key. It turned in the lock to the sounds of music. A door opened upon slow hinges, and disclosed a winding stair within. The key vanished from his fingers. Tangle went up. Mossy followed. The door closed behind them.

They climbed out of the earth; and, still climbing, rose above it. They were in the rainbow. Far abroad, over ocean and land, they could see through its transparent walls the earth beneath their feet. Stairs beside stairs wound up together, and beautiful beings of all ages climbed along with them.

They knew that they were going up to the country whence the shadows fell.

And by this time I think they must have got there.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

(By kind permission of Dr. Greville MacDonald.)

SPRING.

AGAIN the violet of our early days
Drinks beauteous azure from the golden sun
And kindles into fragrance at his blaze ;
The streams, rejoiced that winter's work is done,
Talk of to-morrow's cowslips, as they run.
Wild apple ! thou art bursting into bloom ;
Thy leaves are coming, snowy blossomed thorn !
Wake, buried lily ! spirit, quit thy tomb ;
And thou, shade-loving hyacinth, be born.
Then, haste, sweet rose, sweet woodbine, hymn the morn,
Whose dewdrops shall illumine with pearly light
Each grassy blade that thick embattled stands
From sea to sea, while daisies infinite
Uplift in praise their little glowing hands
O'er every hill that under heaven expands.

EBENEZER ELLIOT.

OLD COUNTRY SONGS.

I.

Now is the month of maying,
When merry lads are playing,
Each with his bonny lass
Upon the greeny grass.

Fa la la

The spring clad all in gladness
Doth laugh at winter's sadness,
And to the bagpipes' sound
The nymphs * tread out their ground.

Fa la la.

* Nymphs = maidens.



Photo

[H. Irving]

“SNOWY BLOSSOMED THORN.”

(*The Blackthorn.*)

Fie then, why sit we musing,
Youth's sweet delight refusing?
Say, dainty nymphs, and speak,
Shall we play barley break? *
Fa 'la la.

II.

JACK and Joan they think no ill,
But loving live, and merry still;
Do their week day's work, and pray
Devoutly on the holy day:
Skip and trip it on the green,
And help to choose the summer Queen;
Lash out at a country feast
Their silver penny with the best.

Well can they judge of nappy ale,
And tell at large a winter tale;
Climb up to the apple loft,
And turn the crabs † till they be soft.
Tib is all the father's joy,
And little Tom the mother's boy.
All their pleasure is content,
And care to pay their yearly rent.

Joan can call by name her cows
And deck her windows with green boughs;
She can wreaths and tutties ‡ make,
And trim with plums a bridal cake.

* The name of an old tune.

† Crab-apples. ‡ Nosegays.

Jack knows what brings him gain or loss;
And his long flail can stoutly toss:
Makes the hedge which others break
And ever thinks what he doth speak.

III.

SISTER, awake! close not your eyes!
The day her light discloses,
And bright our morning doth arise
Out of her bed of roses.

See, the clear sun, the world's bright eye,
In at our window peeping;
Lo! how he blusheth to espy
Us idle maidens sleeping.

Therefore, awake, make haste, I say,
And let us, without staying,
All in our gowns of green so gay
Into the park go maying.

THOMAS CAMPION.

SANDY AND THE "SEA-OSTRICH."

A BOY SCOUT STORY.

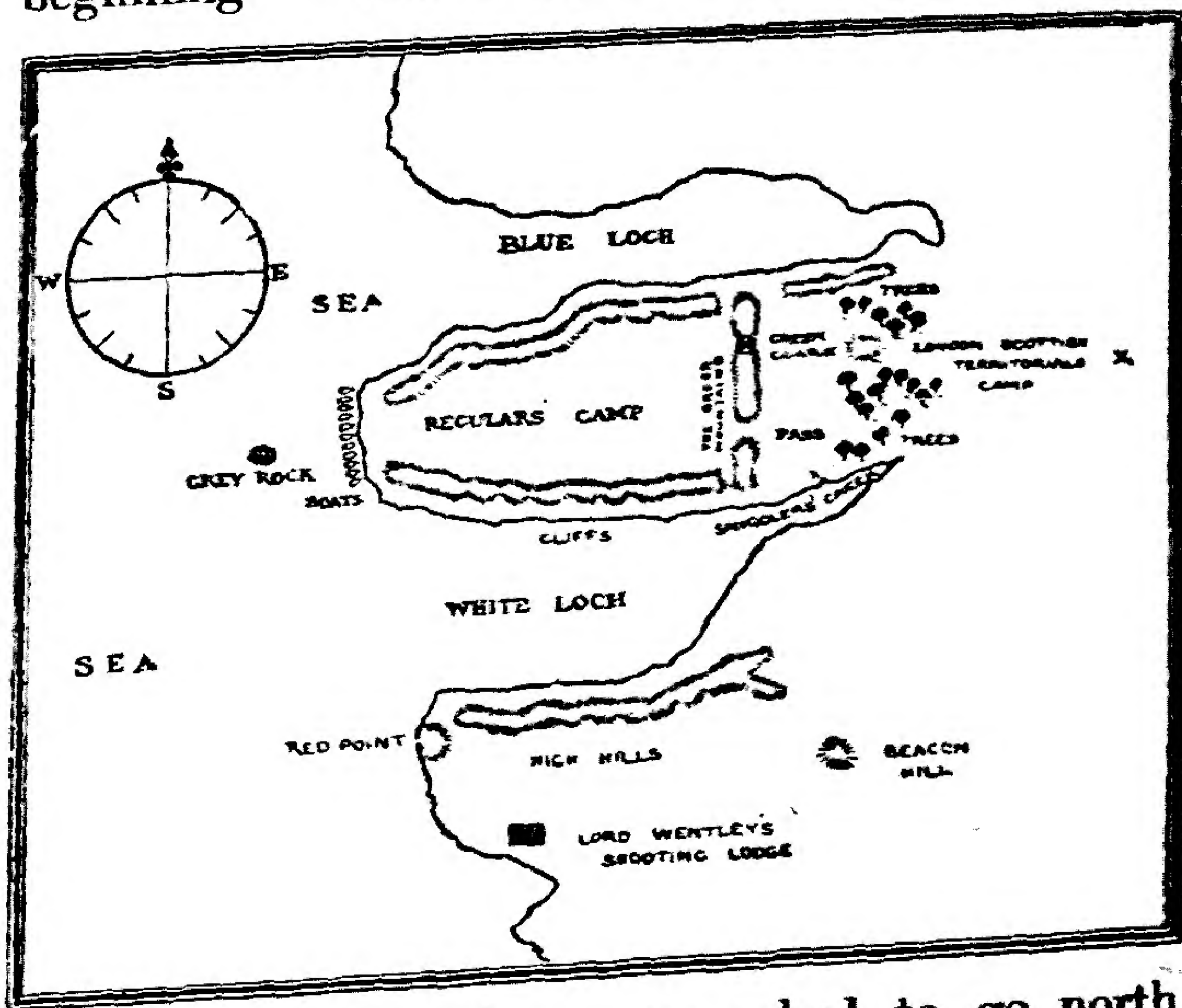
PART I.

SANDY is the hero of my story. He is the leader of the troop of Boy Scouts called "The Snakes." And it was owing to "The Snakes," and especially to Sandy, that the Battle of White Loch was won.

It was only a sham battle, but Sandy nearly lost his life, for he did his duty, and suffered as much hardship as if he were engaged in a real

battle. As Colonel Grayson said afterwards, Sandy deserved to get a commission in the Regular army, and the boy who rescued him was worthy of a Victoria Cross.

But I must tell you the whole story from the beginning. "The Snakes" were very proud of



themselves, when they were asked to go north to the Highlands of Scotland with the London Scottish Territorials, who went on a summer route march through that wild hilly country, and engaged in a sham battle with Regular troops.

The battle was fought at White Loch, which is a broad arm of the sea.

On its south shore there are high mountains, and its north shore is fringed by a line of cliffs, but behind the cliffs there is a wide space as flat as a pancake. A ridge of hills protects this space from the east, but the ridge is cut through by a pass shaped like a V.

On the north the place is protected from attack by another arm of the sea, called the Blue Loch.

The Regulars had their camp on the flat promontory, and so were sheltered from observation. They were supposed to be a small army of foreign invaders.

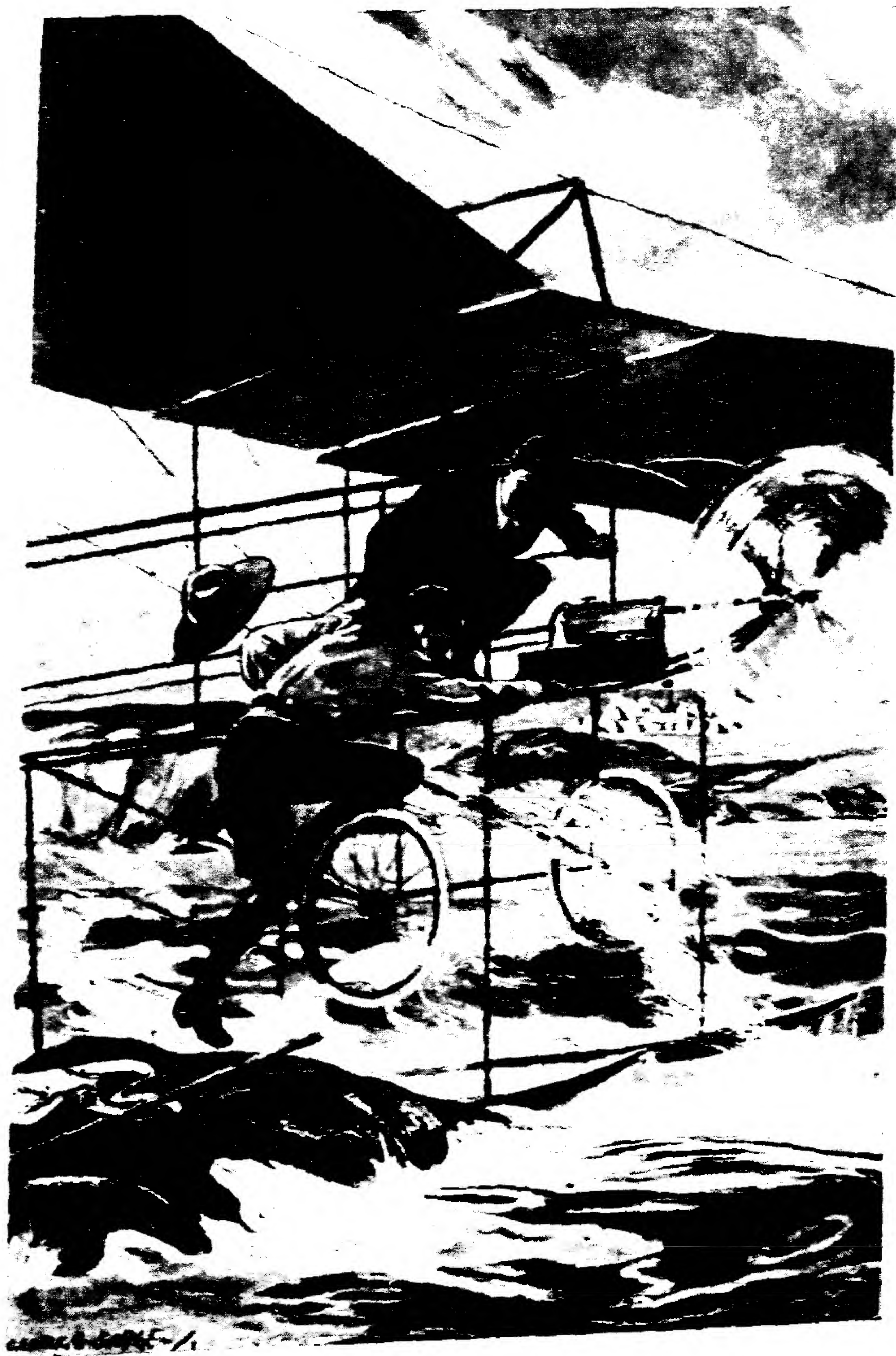
The London Scottish Territorials were the British troops, whose duty it was to capture the enemy's camp.

Between the Territorial camp and the Green Mountains were thick clumps of trees, which enabled the citizen soldiers to move about practically unseen by the Regulars.

When war was declared, the Regulars captured all the boats in White Loch and Blue Loch, and anchored them at the point of the promontory. The commander of the London Scottish was therefore unable to examine the coast, or send his scouts to take observations of the enemy's camp to find out how their troops were distributed on the Green Mountains. But he decided to send "The Snakes" towards Red Point, on the



"SANDY PADDED TOWARDS THE GREY ROCK WITHOUT THE REGULARS
SEEING HIM."



THE SHIP'S DECK, WITH THE MAST AND RIGGING, AS SEEN FROM THE DECK.
THE SHIP IS AN OLD, WOODEN VESSEL, AND THE DECK IS COVERED WITH
VARIOUS ITEMS, INCLUDING A LARGE, LIGHT-COLORED BAG OR BUNDLE.

Fortunately for Sandy, he met Lord Wentley's son, Percy, the famous boy aeroplanist. Percy told him that the Regulars had captured all the boats, but he gave Sandy a canvas canoe, and told him that he could not go to Grey Rock before six o'clock in the morning, for it was covered over at every tide.

Lord Wentley had a shooting lodge near Red Point, and the Regulars did not know that Percy possessed a canoe.

A thick haze hung over the sea in the morning, and Sandy paddled towards Grey Rock without the Regulars seeing him. He steered with a compass, and was very lucky in reaching the rock safely.

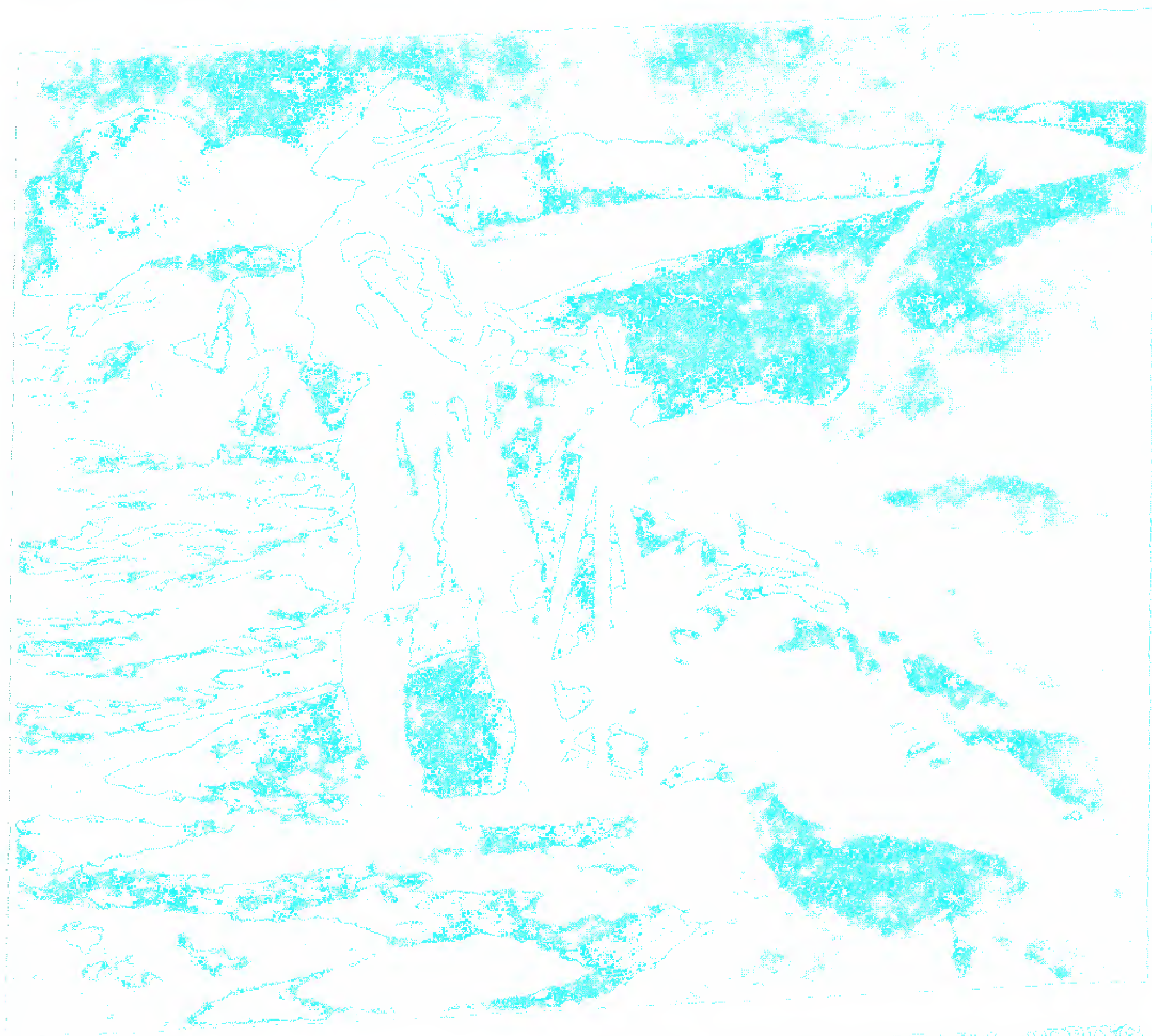
He lay down behind a clump of sea-weed, and tied sea-weed round his cap. He was not observed by the Regulars, and he saw all their movements and signalled them to Red Point.

Before ten o'clock the Scottish Territorials had won the battle, for they rushed through the Pass, which was defended by a very small force.

Colonel Grayson, who commanded the Regulars, took it for granted that the Territorials would think that the Pass was strongly defended, and he sent the bulk of his men to Green Corrie, on the north, where he expected the attack would be made. The colonel of the London Scottish

intended to force his way by Green Corrie, and he would have done so, had not Sandy sent him the information he did.

Colonel Grayson was very angry when he saw how easily and how quickly he was defeated.



THE MAN WHOSE ALARM FIRST INFORMED US OF COLONEL GRAYSON'S DEFEAT.

The colonel was standing on the cliffs overlooking his camp, when he saw Sandy on the rock. A lieutenant drew his attention to the lad, who, he thought, was a spy.

"What, nonsense," said the colonel, looking

through his glasses; "I never heard of a khaki-coloured seal before."

"But I am certain it is a seal," said the lieutenant, "for I saw it moving."

"It may be a very rare specimen," said another officer; "we should have it shot."

"This is a land of marvels," said the colonel. "Last night some of our men declared that they saw a sea-ostrich near the rock."

"Perhaps it was the sea-serpent," laughed the lieutenant.

"It sunk all our boats, whatever it was," said the colonel.

"The sinking of the boats is certainly a mystery," said the lieutenant. "I am certain the Territorials did that, but what puzzles me is when did they get a boat to come round? We took possession of every boat for miles round."

"I doubt it," said the colonel; "I expect the 'sea-ostrich' was just a boatful of Territorials."

"But, sir," said the lieutenant, "the men saw the 'sea-ostrich,' as they called it, flying over the water towards the south."

"Tuts!" said the colonel. "Don't talk nonsense; what I'd like to know is how the Territorials discovered how our men were placed. There is not the least doubt that they knew all our movements."

clever young rascal. It was he who spied on us. Well, well, what is the world coming to? To think that I should be fooled by a mere boy after all these years of soldiering!"

SANDY AND THE "SEA-OSTRICH."

PART III.

"The boy is signalling to us," said the lieutenant.

"What is he saying?" asked the colonel. "I hope he has not been struck."

The lieutenant watched Sandy's arms moving up and down like a semaphore, and read:—

"My canoe drifted away; tide rising fast: send a boat."

The officers glanced at one another in silence.

"There is no boat to send," said the colonel, whose face grew suddenly very pale.

"Poor lad! he'll be drowned," the major added.

"I wish I could swim as far as the rock," said the lieutenant; "but I'm a poor swimmer, and the tide is very strong. I should drown like a rat."

"One thing is certain," cried the colonel, "we can't stand here watching the brave little boy

Sandy's position was fast becoming a very critical one. The tide was rising quickly, and the heat of the sun was almost unbearable. The rock was indeed nearly as hot as an oven-plate. Sandy did not know what to do,



"THE COLONEL ORDERED A MESSAGE TO BE SENT TO SANDY."

and he was weary and faint with hunger. He began to feel dizzy, as he stood up on the rock in the midst of the cruel hungry waters. The spot on which he had sat, when watching the battle, was already wet. Spray broke high now and again and drenched his boots. He

He glanced shorewards. What was keeping them? There was no sign of a boat coming. Sandy signalled once again:—

"Do hurry up. I can't swim. Send a boat."

"This is terrible!" exclaimed the colonel. "Nothing has been done yet. Can't they get out that raft? The boy will be drowned."

"The raft is nearly ready," the major said, as he gazed through his field-glasses at the camp.

"They'll never reach the boy in time," said the colonel excitedly.

"I'm afraid—afraid he'll drown," the major muttered dolefully.

The colonel turned round sharply, and stared at the major with twitching lips.

"Look! look! look!" cried another officer.

The colonel placed his hands over his eyes. "Don't tell me he's drowned!" he groaned.

"It's the 'sea-ostrich,' colonel, look!" the major exclaimed.

The colonel looked round. All the officers looked together, and what they saw astonished them very much indeed.

A huge bird-like object, as big as a boat, was seen rounding Red Point.

It looked like a great ostrich. Of course, an ostrich does not fly, but this was the "sea-ostrich,"



"A HUGE BIRD-LIKE OBJECT, AS BIG AS A BOAT, WAS SEEN BOUNDING RED POINT."

as the new type of aeroplane was called after that day.

"The boy will be rescued," exclaimed the colonel.

"But," said the major, "an aeroplane can't land on that rock. I hope the boy won't be struck off."

Nearer and nearer came the "sea-ostrich." It was flying about ten feet above the surface of the sea, and was evidently making a bee-line for the rock.

Suddenly the officers saw two long objects, like barrel-staves, dropping down from the body of the "ostrich" machine.

"Ah! I see now," exclaimed the major. "It is a combination of an aeroplane and seaplane. What a beauty!"

As he spoke the "sea-ostrich" skimmed along the surface of the water, settling on it just like a duck. It moved quickly towards the rock. Then they saw Sandy climbing on board, and taking his seat beside the driver, who was a lad not much older than himself.

In another minute the "sea-ostrich" rose in the air again. It whirled round in three magnificent and graceful circles, as it rose and came towards the officers on the cliffs. Like a bird, it then settled down, not a dozen yards away from the colonel.

Sandy was much exhausted. Indeed, he was hardly able to speak. The colonel put his arms round him and cried, "Thank God! you are safe. I am proud of you, my brave little scout."

"You're a brick!" the major said.

Sandy was very proud. But he was still all a-tremble with excitement after what he had gone through. He glanced back at the rock, and saw the white foam breaking over it.

"You were not a moment too soon," the colonel said to Percy; for Percy it was.

"It was hard lines having to show my machine to everyone," said Percy; "I wanted to keep it a secret."

"Oh! indeed," said the colonel. "Why?"

"In case the foreigners came and invaded our country," answered Percy.

"I suppose," the colonel remarked very slowly, "I suppose you would sink all their small boats."

Percy laughed; so did all the officers. The colonel took hold of Percy's right ear between his finger and thumb, and said, "There's the young rascal who sank all our boats, and prevented us from sending round our men to make a feint attack at Smugglers' Creek. We must hang this fellow because he is not in uniform."

Sandy and Percy were taken to the camp, and they had luncheon with the officers.

The colonel had afterwards two medals made, and he gave one to Sandy for winning the battle by directing the Territorials, and one to Percy, not for sinking boats, but for rescuing Sandy with his "sea-ostrich."

DONALD H. MACKENZIE.

THE POETRY OF EARTH.

THE poetry of earth is never dead :
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead ;
That is the grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury. He has never done
With his delights ; for when tired out with fun,
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never :
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

JOHN KEATS.

THE SYLVAN LIFE.

WHEN in the woods I wander all alone,
The woods that are my solace and delight,
Which I more covet than a prince's throne,
My toil by day and canopy by night—
(Light heart, light foot, light food, and slumber light,
These lights shall light me to old age's gate,
While monarchs whom rebellious dreams affright,

Heavy with fear, death's fearful summons wait);
 Whilst here I wander, pleased to be alone,
 Weighing in thought the world's no-happiness,
 I cannot choose but wonder at its moan,
 Since so plain joys the woody life can bless:
 Then live who may where honeyed words prevail,
 I with the deer, and with the nightingale!

LORD THURLOW.

BRAVE DEEDS.

PART I.

IN the very middle of the city of London, and therefore where you would least expect it, there is a quiet garden, with a few sheltering trees and some pretty flower beds and stretches of green grass, with here and there a seat for the tired passer-by.

It once was an old churchyard, but it is now called the Postmen's Park, and it is easy to understand why, for it lies at the back of the General Post Office, and in the course of the day you will see many a postman enjoying the sight of the flowers and the shade of the trees, as he rests upon one of the garden seats.

But there is something to be seen in the Postmen's Park besides the trees and flowers and green grass, for underneath a portico, half-way up the garden, and fixed into the wall above

a line of seats, you will see a number of tablets, which have been put up to the memory of men and women and children who died whilst saving the lives of others.

It was a beautiful thought to place these stone tablets here in what had been an old churchyard. That beautiful thought came into the head of one of the greatest of English artists, George Frederick Watts, and largely at his own expense he put them up, with the simple, touching inscriptions that are to be found upon them.

There are too many for all of them to be included here, but these are some of the inscriptions to the memory of the heroes and heroines whose dying acts they record :

“Daniel Pemberton, aged 61, foreman of the London and South-Western Railway, surprised by a train when gauging the line, hurled his mate out of the track, saving his life at the cost of his own. January 17th, 1903.”

“Henry James Bristow, aged 8, at Walthamstow, on December 30th, 1890, saved his little sister's life by tearing off her flaming clothes, but caught fire himself and died of burns and shock.”

“Robert Wright, police constable of Croydon, entered a burning house to save a woman, knowing that there was petroleum stored in the cellar.

An explosion took place and he was killed on April 30th, 1903."

"Solomon Galaman, aged 11, died of injuries, September 6th, 1901, after saving his little brother from being run over in Commercial Street. 'Mother! I ~~saved~~ him, but I could not save myself.'"

"George Lee, fireman, at a fire in Clerkenwell carried an unconscious girl to the escape, falling six times, and ~~of~~ ~~him~~ July 26th, 1876."

"Harry Sisley, ~~fireman~~ ~~at~~ ~~a~~ ~~fire~~ ~~in~~ ~~at~~ ~~tempting~~ ~~to~~ ~~save~~ ~~his~~ ~~brother~~, after he ~~himself~~ had been just rescued. May 24th, 1878."

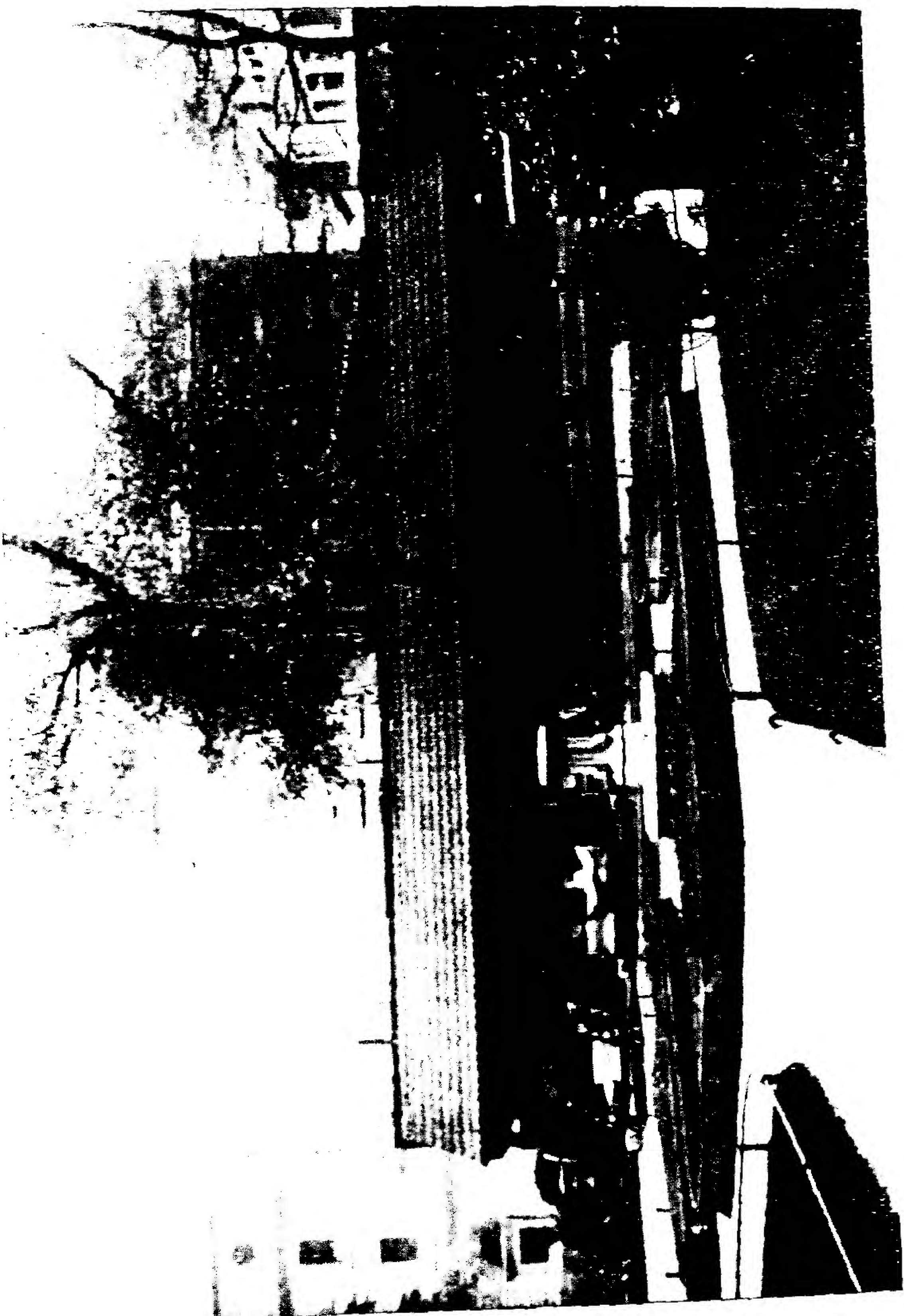
"William Fisher, aged 9. Lost his life in Rodney Road, Walworth, while trying to save his little brother from being run over. July 12th, 1886."

"Mary Rogers, stewardess of the 'Stella,' March 30th, 1899. Self-sacrificed by giving up her life-belt and voluntarily going down in the sinking ship."

"Joseph Andrew Ford, aged 30, Metropolitan Fire Brigade, saved six persons from fire in Gray's Inn Road, but in his last heroic act he was scorched to death. October 7th, 1871."



"I HAULED MYSELF PARTLY ON TO THE ICE, BUT IT WAS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO BEAR MY WEIGHT, AND A LARGE PIECE OF IT BROKE OFF."



THE POLYMER - PAGE 1

BRAVE DEEDS.

PART II.

“Thomas Simpson died from exhaustion after saving many lives from the breaking ice at Highgate Pond. January 28th, 1885.”

This last heroic deed is thus described at length in a newspaper of the day :

“Yesterday evening, shortly after five o'clock, about two hundred people were skating on what is known as the second of the Highgate ponds, when a large portion of the ice gave way. Some persons were immersed in the water, but nearly all of them were rescued.

“Thomas Simpson, a labourer, in the employment of Mr. Ward, a farmer, who rents the pond fields, rendered most valuable assistance in rescuing several of the others, but as he was stooping to pull a man out, the ice on which he was himself standing gave way, and in a moment he had disappeared beneath the water. With the aid of the drags he was recovered, but he expired in a few minutes.”

In order that boys and girls who are out skating may have an idea what to do when the ice breaks under them, and they are in danger of their lives, it may be well to quote this letter that appeared in the *Times* immediately after the accident :

“ Many years ago, when assisting in the rescue of a boy who had broken through the ice over deep water in the Serpentine, and when the ice, which was thoroughly rotten, also gave way under me, and I was instantly immersed up to my neck, I saved myself in the following way:

“ The boy being by this time safe, and in charge of an ice-man. I spread my arms out over the ice as far as I could reach, and keeping my hands wide apart, I then tucked up my feet well under me and struck out with them behind, at the same time bearing with all my force on the tips of my fingers, and keeping my arms straight.

“ I thus hauled myself partly on to the ice, but it was not strong enough to bear my weight, and a large piece of it broke off, the line of fracture passing through the tips of my fingers.

“ Pressing the broken ice under water and breasting it, I again struck out with my feet, and pushing the broken piece before me, forced it under the main ice. Being lighter than the water, it helped to support the main ice. I repeated this movement with the same result.

“ Having now three thicknesses of ice to support me, I got out without any difficulty, and scrambled along on my stomach, keeping my hands and feet as wide apart as possible, until I thought I

was at a safe distance from the large hole I had left behind me. I should mention, perhaps, that I had skates on, also that I am a good swimmer."

There is one more memorial tablet which we must mention, and that is the one which contains this inscription:

"Alice Ayres, daughter of a bricklayer's labourer, who by intrepid conduct saved three children from a burning house in Union Street, Borough, at the cost of her own young life. April 24th, 1885."

This is how it happened. A fire broke out in the night at the house of an oil and colour man in Union Street, Borough.

Alice Ayres, a servant in the house, roused by the noise of the flames, rushed to the front window, crying for help. The people in the street below shouted out to her to jump and save herself, at the same time stretching out some clothing to break her fall.

But though the flames had by this time got hold of the oils and other inflammable stuff in the shop, and were spreading fearfully fast, and she was facing a dreadful death, Alice Ayres did not flinch for one moment, but going back into the house, dragged a feather bed after her and threw it out. This was caught by the people



HOW ALICE AYRES SAVED THE LIVES OF HER MASTER'S CHILDREN.

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below and stretched out under the window. Very soon Alice appeared again with her master's little daughter, and with all care dropped her down on to the bed.

She was successful in this way in saving three children, the first without any hurt, the second and third with trifling injuries, for the great heat and the suffocating fumes of the fire were affecting her, and had made her hold less firm and her aim less steady.

She had now done all that it was possible for her to do—indeed more than anyone would have done who was not completely self-sacrificing.

The fire had so gained upon her that she must escape at once, if she was to escape at all. She accordingly sprang from the window, but in her nervous and exhausted state she missed her mark, striking against some ironwork over the shop front, and fell short of the bed upon the pavement.

She was picked up and taken to Guy's Hospital, with her spine dislocated and with no hope of recovery. "Such," writes the *Times* in a leading article, from which this account is taken, "has been her choice, noble, but fatal to herself. A tribute of honour is all that we can now pay to a deed of heroism and self-devotion which has at no time been surpassed."

BRAVE DEEDS.

PART III.

Here is the story of a boy hero.

Sidney Warner, aged ten, was employed by a farmer of Chestnut Hill as a herd boy. One night, when the cows were driven home, it was found that one of them called Daisy, because she was so white, had gone astray.

No doubt Sidney got a scolding for this, and he must have felt very unhappy, as she did not return to the farm during the night.

Early next morning he went off in search of her, and ran some risk on her account by walking up the railway between Chestnut Hill and the river, where there is a deep cutting. He passed through this, and mounting the hill, to his great delight found Daisy, entangled by her horns in a young chestnut-tree. The poor creature had been held fast there for the whole night, and we may well believe how glad she was to hear Sidney calling out to her.

But before he had time to set her free, he heard a tremendous noise like a discharge of cannon, or the rolling of thunder. He ran back again down the hill to see what it could mean, and found, to his surprise and alarm, that a great bank of earth had fallen upon the line.



"RUNNING ALONG THE LINE, HE WAVED THE RED FLANNEL IN
FRONT OF THE COMING TRAIN."

Sidney remembered that a train was almost due, and as he stood there, he heard the engine whistling three miles away. What do you think he did? Well, he took off his jacket and a red flannel vest which he wore; then, running along the line, he waved the red flannel in front of the coming train.

The engine driver, guessing that Sidney was waving his own danger signal, brought the train to a stand-still, and cried out to know what was the matter.

"A landslide," cried Sidney; "the hill is down on the line." Then, wrapping his red flannel vest round his shoulders, he ran back to pick up his other clothes, and was out of sight before the passengers knew from what a terrible danger Sidney had saved them. He put on his clothes, climbed the hill, set Daisy free from her imprisonment in the chestnut clump, and drove her home.

BRAVE DEEDS.

PART IV.

And now for a story about a brave girl, who saved life without losing her own.

No doubt, most of you children have been both to a circus and a wild beast show. Well, one day,

what you might call a circus and a wild beast show rolled into one came into a country town, and no doubt all the children in the neighbourhood were looking forward with great delight to seeing the clever riding of the performers, and to watch the tiger and the other wild beasts in the cages being fed.

The manager of this circus and show was named Lopez; he had his wagons containing the tents and wild beasts, and the men and women and boys and girls of his company, driven into the circus field in the evening. The tents were pitched, the cages arranged, and all the other preparations for the next day's entertainment completed.

After they had had their supper, Lopez, with his son and daughter, went into the arena, and began to teach his son, Pedro, a trick upon some bars that had been erected in the ring. Looking down from the bar on which he was seated, he saw, to his horror, that the tiger, which had not yet been fed, had somehow or other slipped from his cage, and was stealing up to his son, who was on the bar just below him.

Without losing his presence of mind, he called out to the boy, quickly but quite quietly, "Pedro, climb up here at once." And the boy, who was an obedient one, at once did so, but only just in time, for the tiger had sprung at him, and only

missed him by a second. Lopez shouted to one of his men to throw some raw meat into the ring to the tiger, but before he had time to do it, Lopez saw his daughter, Lola, rush into the ring by the corner of the tiger's cage. The tiger, turning, saw her, and flew at her.

But Lola knew well what she was about, for she ran into the tiger's cage, which was in two compartments, and opened and bolted the inner door behind her. The tiger sprang after her, hurling himself against the partition behind which she had got. But in another moment Lopez had secured the outer door, and the tiger was a prisoner again, while Lola slipped smiling out of the outer door of the inner compartment.

Lopez may well have been proud of such a brave and clever daughter.

LONDON FROM WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

EARTH has not anything to show more fair ;
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty ;
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill ;

Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will ;
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

THE LEGEND OF KNOCKGRAFTON.

PART I.

THERE was once a poor man, who lived in a fertile glen at the foot of the gloomy Galtee Mountains, and he had a great hump on his back. He looked just as if his body had been rolled up and placed upon his shoulders, and his head was pressed down with the weight so much that his chin, when he was sitting, used to rest upon his knees for support.

The country people were rather shy of meeting him in any lonesome place, for though, poor creature ! he was as harmless as a new-born infant, yet his deformity was so great that he scarcely appeared to be a human creature, and some ill-minded persons had set strange stories about him afloat.

He was said to have a great knowledge of herbs and charms ; but certain it was that he had a mighty skilful hand in plaiting straws and rushes into hats and baskets, which was the way he made his living.

Lusmore, for that was the nickname put upon him, by reason of his always wearing a sprig of the fairy cap, or lusmore (the foxglove), in his little straw hat, would ever get a higher penny for his plaited work than any one else, and perhaps that was the reason why some one, out of envy, had started the strange stories about him.

Be that as it may, it happened that he was returning one evening from the pretty town of Cahir towards Cappagh. Little Lusmore walked very slowly, on account of the great hump upon his back, and it was quite dark when he came to the old moat of Knockgrafton, which stood on the right-hand side of the road.

Tired and weary was he, and noways comfortable in his own mind at thinking how much farther he had to travel, and that he should be walking all the night; so he sat down under the moat to rest himself, and began looking mournfully enough upon the moon.

Presently there arose a wild strain of music upon the ear of Lusmore; he listened, and he thought that he had never heard such lovely sounds before. It was like the sound of many voices, each mingling and blending with the other so strangely that they seemed to be one, though all singing different strains.

The words of the song were these:—

“Da Luan, Da Mort ; Da Luan, Da Mort ; Da Luan, Da Mort ; Da Luan, Da Mort ” ;

there would be a moment's pause, and then the round of melody went on again.

Lusmore listened quietly, scarcely drawing his breath, lest he might lose the slightest note. He now plainly saw that the singing was within the moat ; and though at first it had charmed him so much, he began to get tired of hearing the same sound sung over and over so often without any change.

Availing himself of the pause when “Da Luan, Da Mort,” which means “Monday, Tuesday”, had been sung three times, he took up the tune, and raised it with the words “augus Da Dardeen” (“and Wednesday too”), and then went on singing with the voices inside of the moat, “Da Luan, Da Mort,” finishing the melody, when the pause came again, with “augus Da Dardeen.”

The fairies within Knockgraston, for the song was a fairy melody, when they heard this addition to the tune, were so much delighted that, with instant resolve, it was determined to bring the mortal among them, whose musical skill so far exceeded theirs, and Lusmore was

conveyed into their company with the speed of lightning.

THE LEGEND OF KNOCKGRAFTON.

PART II.

Glorious to behold was the sight that burst upon him as he came down through the moat, twirling round and round, with the lightness of a straw, to the sweetest music that kept time to his motion. The greatest honour was then paid him, for he was put above all the musicians, and he had servants tending upon him, and everything to his heart's content, and a hearty welcome to all; and, in short, he was made as much of as if he had been the first man in the land.

Presently Lusmore heard a great talking going on among the fairies, and notwithstanding all their civility, he felt very much frightened, until one, stepping out from the rest, came up to him.

She spoke kindly to him and said:—

“Lusmore! Lusmore!
Doubt not, nor deplore,
For the hump which you bore,
On your back is no more;
Look down on the floor,
And view it, Lusmore!”



"THE HUMP WHICH YOU BORE,
ON YOUR BACK IS NO MORE."

When these words were said, poor Lusmore felt himself so light and so happy, that he thought he could have bounded at one jump over the moon, like the cow in the story of the cat and the fiddle; and he saw, with delight, his hump tumble down upon the ground from his shoulders.

He then tried to lift up his head, and did so with caution, fearing that he might knock it against the ceiling of the great hall, where he was. He looked round and round again with the greatest wonder and joy upon everything, which appeared more and more beautiful.

Overpowered at beholding such a scene, his head grew dizzy, and his eyesight grew dim. At last he fell into a sound sleep, and when he awoke, he found that it was broad daylight, the sun shining brightly, and the birds singing sweetly; and that he was lying just at the foot of Knockgraston, with the cows and sheep grazing peaceably about him.

The first thing Lusmore did, after saying his prayers, was to put his hand behind, to feel for his hump, but no sign of one was there on his back. He looked at himself with great pride, for he had now become a well-shaped, dapper little fellow, and, more than that, found himself in a full suit of new clothes,

tell, had his hump taken off by the fairies; for there is a son of a gossip of mine who has got a hump on him that will be his death; and maybe, if he could use the same charm as Lusmore, the hump may be taken off him. And now I have told you the reason of my coming so far; 'tis to find out about this charm, if I can."

Lusmore, who was ever a good-natured little fellow, told the woman the whole story—how he had raised the tune for the fairies at Knockgraston, how his hump had been removed from his shoulders, and how he had got a new suit of clothes into the bargain.

The woman thanked him very much, and then went away, quite happy and easy in her own mind. When she came back to her gossip's house, in the county of Waterford, she told her everything that Lusmore had said, and they put the little hump-backed man, who was a peevish and cunning creature from his birth, upon a car, and took him all the way across the country.

It was a long journey, but they did not care for that, if the hump was only taken off him; so they brought him just at nightfall, and left him under the old moat of Knockgraston.

Jack Madden, for that was the humpy man's name, had not been sitting there long when he

heard the tune going on within the moat much sweeter than before; for the fairies were singing it the way Lusmore had settled their music for them, and the song was going on: "Da Luan, Da Mort; Da Luan, Da Mort; Da Luan, Da Mort, agus Da Dardeen," without ever stopping.

Jack Madden, who was in a great hurry to get quit of his hump, never thought of waiting till the fairies had done, or watching for a fit opportunity to raise the tune higher again than Lusmore had. Having heard them sing it over seven times without stopping, out he bawls, never minding the time or the humour of the tune, or how he could bring his words in properly, "agus Da Dardeen agus Da Hena" ("and Wednesday and Thursday too,") thinking that, if one day was good, two were better; and that, if Lusmore had one new suit of clothes given him, he should have two.

No sooner had the words passed his lips, than he was taken up and whisked into the moat; and the fairies came crowding round about him in great anger, screeching and screaming, and roaring out, "Who spoiled our tune? Who spoiled our tune?"

One stepped up to him above all the rest, and said:—

"Jack Madden! Jack Madden!
Your words came so bad in
The tune we felt glad in;—
This castle you're had in.
That your life we may sadden;
Here's two humps for Jack Madden!"



JACK MADDEN AND THE FAIRIES.

Twenty of the strongest fairies brought Lusmore's hump, and put it down upon poor Jack's back, over his own, where it became fixed as firmly as if it was nailed on with twelve-penny nails, by the best carpenter that ever drove one.

Out of their castle they then kicked him, and

in the morning, when Jack Madden's mother and her gossip came to look after their little man, they found him half dead, lying at the foot of the moat, with the other hump upon his back.

Well, to be sure, how they did look at each other, but they were afraid to say anything, lest a hump might be put upon their own shoulders. Home they brought the unlucky Jack Madden with them, as downcast in their hearts and their looks as ever two gossips were.

What through the weight of his other hump, and the long journey, he died soon after, leaving, they say, a terrible warning to any one who would go to listen to fairy tunes again.

T. CROFTON CROKER.

THE ENGLISH BOY.

LOOK from the ancient mountains down,
My noble English boy !
Thy country's fields around thee gleam
In sunlight and in joy.

Ages have rolled since foeman's march
Passed o'er that old, firm sod ;
For well the land hath fealty held
To freedom and to God !

Gaze proudly on, my English boy !
And let thy kindling mind

Drink in the spirit of free thought
From every chainless mind !

There, in the shadow of old Time,
The halls beneath thee lie
Which poured forth to the fields of yore
Our England's chivalry.

How bravely and how solemnly
They stand, midst oak and yew !
Whence Cressy's yeomen haply framed
The bow, in battle true.

And round their walls the good swords hang
Whose faith knew no alloy,
And shields of knighthood, pure from stain :
Gaze on, my English boy !

Gaze where the hamlet's ivied church
Gleams by the antique elm,
Or where the minster lifts the cross
High through the air's blue realm.

Martyrs have showered their free heart's blood
That England's prayer might rise,
From those grey fanes of thoughtful years,
Unfettered to the skies.

Along their aisles, beneath their trees,
This earth's most glorious dust,
Once fired with valour, wisdom, song,
Is laid in holy trust.

Gaze on—gaze farther, farther yet—
My gallant English boy !

Yon blue sea bears thy country's flag,
The billows' pride and joy.

Those waves in many a fight have closed
Above her faithful dead ;
That red-crossed flag victoriously
Hath floated o'er their bed.

And high and clear their memory's light
Along our shore is set,
And many an answering beacon fire
Shall there be kindled yet !

Lift up thy heart, my English boy !
And pray like them to stand,
Should God so summon thee, to guard
The altars of the land.

MRS. HEMANS.

ADVENTURES IN NORTH RUSSIA.

PART I.—THE SNOWSTORM.

Oswald MacGregor, a young Highlander, and Ivan Moscowvitch, a young Russian, become friends. Ivan has stayed in Scotland with the MacGregors, and now Oswald is paying a return visit to Madame Moscowvitch in Russia, during which time the boys pass through this adventure.]

THE stars were shining brightly at five this morning when the party left Castro's, and just as brightly at half-past eight when they stopped in a hollow to rest the nags.

But Rattler, who seemed to be the wiser of the two ponies, sniffed the air with expanded nostrils, and snorted, and pawed the snow uneasily.

"He knows," said Lupo. "He knows. He wants to start, that his bed to-night may not be beneath the snow."

Lupo refreshed himself with a little snow, pointed silently to the hills, and remounted.

The ponies needed but little encouragement now to do their best, and whenever the snow was level they made good speed.

When they came to a hill the work was far harder; but now Lupo dismounted, and led, or rather pulled, the ponies, while Oswald and Ivan pushed up behind.

But so hard was the work, that it was found necessary, when they reached a hill-top, to stop some time for rest.

And thus the day sped on.

They had mounted the last hill and were within sight of their camp, though it was nearly four miles off, when a low moaning sound came from the pine-trees. They seemed to quiver and shake, while huge pieces of half-powdery snow fell down. These, alighting on our heroes, on the dogs and ponies, changed their colour somewhat.

Then the wind began to raise its voice, coming not steadily, but in threatening gusts.

Lupo made no effort to start just yet, however. He was unusually silent.

The storm would soon be on them, that he knew well, and he was taking his bearings, mapping out the road as it were, and sketching on the tablets of his memory every rock and bush and tree that lay between his party and the distant camp.

The ponies were eating snow. Instead of preventing them as he sometimes did, Lupo helped them. Then he opened a sack of black oats and, filling his great cap, he fed them with handfuls each in his turn.

“Now, young masters, now!”

The road was fairly level at this part, but the clouds grew thicker overhead, great flakes began to fall, and the voice of the snow-spirit, which is the voice of the rising wind, was now heard shrieking through the forest.

So quickly does the snow fall in these bitter regions, so thickly too, that before another mile had been covered, the tracks made the day before could not now be seen. It was only with the greatest difficulty that even Lupo could make out his own landmarks. Instead of driving, he now walked on ahead, the ponies following like dogs. He frequently lifted his hand, and at this signal they stopped at once, until by examining trees or rocks he could make out the road, when

he beckoned them on once more. This was very slow and wearisome, toilsome work, but it was the only method of reaching camp in safety. To get but once away from the right track would—well, *might* mean death to all the little expedition.

Poor Luath, one of the dogs, had often been out during snowstorms among his native hills, and seeing Lupo groping onwards through the storm and gathering gloom, he seemed to grasp the situation all at once. He ran on now, even ahead of Lupo, and presently could be heard barking, as much as to say—

“Come on, come on. This is the way.”

The young travellers noticed that Lupo always did go in the direction indicated, although, as if afraid to trust Luath’s instinct entirely, he stopped to look at his own landmarks, to make sure he was on the right track.

It cannot be doubted, however, that the collie was of very great assistance to the party.

After all, it was a question whether they should be able to reach the camp in time to save themselves, for darkness would close over them to-day a full hour before its usual time. And such a night it would be! for the wind was already careering through the forest, by the edge of which their road lay.

Flakes of snow fell no longer; that is, if the

snow did leave the clouds in flakes, these were speedily caught up by the fierce howling wind and broken into ice-dust, a powder so fine that to breathe it produces a feeling like suffocation.



THE SLEDGE STOPPED, AND LUPO TOLD THEM THAT WOLVES WERE ON AHEAD.

And from every rock blew sifted clouds of this terrible ice-dust that filled up the hollows beyond ; while now and then little whirlwinds caught it up and drew it in rings up the sky.

It was almost impossible now for Ivan and Oswald to keep open their eyes. They were almost blinded as well as choked, and could only just see the sledge in front driving through the awful drift.

It might have been an hour after this, it might have been two: Oswald's senses were benumbed, his brains befogged, so he never could tell.

But both he and Ivan were speedily aroused, and as much awake now as ever they had been in their lives, when the sledge stopped suddenly and Lupo appeared beside them, looking like a sheeted ghost, with the terrible intelligence that wolves were on ahead of them.

Both plied him with questions.

"Between us and the cave. Lupo?"

"Yes; they are seeking there for food."

"For food?"

"Yes, young master, food—and blood, yours and mine."

"They are hungry wolves, then?"

"Famishing wolves; and famishing wolves fight like large fiends."

"Heaven help us!" said Oswald: "are there many, think you?"

"From the fresh tracks that Geulo was the first to discover, there must be a pack—twenty at the least. But, young masters, we must

fight. Your guns and pistols are loaded and ready?"

"All; and so are we, Lupo."

Thus spoke bold young Ivan.

"Well, here is my plan. The dogs must be placed in the sledge and tied in under cover. They would quickly be torn in pieces, or else fall under our own guns. I shall mount the sledge, so too must you. It is all downhill now, and only a mile to our own door. See," he added, "it lightens a little. Fate favours us. The tracks of the wolves will guide us back, else this last mile might have been indeed our last. Up, up. Night will soon fall!"

PART II.—CHASED BY WOLVES.

Lupo sprang to the front of the sledge as soon as the dogs were secured, and his companions as speedily followed him.

"On now, good Rattler! On, on, on, Rattler and Rush! Fly, good horses, fly!"

They need no whip. They sniff the air just once, then the sledge seems to fly along the track.

Yes, here and all around is the trail of the fierce-eyed hungry pack, that are already thirsting for their blood. The situation is certainly a terrible one. The very footprints that are

Even the wolves are quiet. They are taken by surprise. It was but the dread stillness, however, that precedes a thunderstorm.

Their leader yells in anger and dashes on towards the armed sledge. Next instant he is lying on his back convulsed and dying, while two more are down near him. But the rest leap over them and dash wildly on to attack the ponies. Another volley and more wolves fall, whether dead or wounded it matters not.

But there are enough of these hunger-maddened and vengeful wolves left yet to quite surround the sledge and tear and devour every living creature thereon.

The blood of the wolf-man—Lupo—is now at boiling pitch, however. Not even Ivan himself had ever seen his visage so fierce, his eyes so full of fire.

“Defend the sledge!” he cries; “I will fight for the ponies!”

He wriggles himself free of his outer coat and cap as he speaks, and springing forward with an agility a wolf itself could hardly equal, alights on Rattler’s back. The horse swerves for a moment, but one word from his master soothes him.

Steady and straight is Lupo’s aim. Crack goes his great revolver, and a huge gaunt wolf that

had flown at Rush's head is shot dead in mid-air; a second is wounded; a third wolf alights between the two horses. Their legs are bitten and torn somewhat, but the beast is trampled to death. Again Lupo fires four more shots at the still-advancing pack, and that, too, most effectively, as their painful and hideous howling proves.

The boys fire as they can with their revolvers, and Ivan's does grand execution. Not a shot of his but claims a victim.

The pack is sadly thinned by this time, but fierce as ever. From both sides and from the back of the sledge they attempt to board, and it is now that the ice-axes come into such deadly play.

Forward, and still on the pony's back, Lupo, with his very last revolver shot, has killed another wolf and saved his horses.

He must pause to reload, and lucky it is for him as well as for the ponies that the brunt of the battle is now being borne by the plucky lads behind. Click, click, click, click. One of Lupo's revolvers is loaded already. A bullet goes whizzing close past Oswald's ear, causing it to ring, and a great grey wolf, which had seized the lad's arm, relaxes his grasp and slides down dead on the snow.



"A HOUND OF THE MOUNTAINS" BY GEORGE ROPER. THE DEAD
HOUND OF THE MOUNTAINS.



“GOOD GUESSO HAS BURST HIS BONDS AND SPRUNG OVERBOARD, LIKE A VERY LION AT BAY, THE SLAVES
TRUMPETANT OVER HIS PROLEGATE ROULETTE.”

Fear seems to take possession of the wolves now, and they are about to draw off, when, in striking at one who had almost gained footing on the sledge-top, poor Ivan misses his balance and falls to the ground.

Oswald is horror-stricken, and can do nothing. Lupo is too far away for the moment. Back rush two great gaunt wolves. They will satisfy hunger and thirst at last with human flesh and blood.

But hark, a louder yell than any that wolf ever made! Good Geulo has burst his bonds and sprung overboard. Like a very lion at bay, he stands triumphant over his prostrate master, snarling and growling, his ivory tusks gleaming white in the now fast-fading light.

The wolves sneak off. The battle is won.

PART III.—FIGHTING THE SNOW.

Poor Luath was not long in following his comrade Geulo; and so confident of his own powers was he, that, had not Oswald called him back in the most decided way, he would have given chase to the remainder of the defeated wolves, and been very quickly torn in pieces.

Rattler whinnied with delight now that all was over; but poor Rush appeared still to be dazed, and even when safe in his stable with an

camp, for a time it appeared to be utterly impossible to reach it. They had to fight with the snow-fiend. As the ice-dust was breathed, it felt as if an invisible spirit were clutching at the throat, and death but a matter of seconds.

They were beaten back again and again, but finally Lupo and Ivan managed to reach the lake by tying nose and mouth up with handkerchiefs. But the ice-hole was blown over, filled up with the drift, and by means of axes another a little farther from the shore had to be opened. This was a work that took them fully half an hour, and, but for the mask he wore, Ivan would undoubtedly have been grievously frost-bitten.

Meanwhile Oswald was endeavouring to take the dogs for a little exercise, but the poor fellows soon gave him to understand that a very little exercise in weather such as this went a long way indeed. They desired to return almost immediately. Oswald would not hear of such a thing. If he could stand the brunt of the storm, he told them, surely they could.

Then away went Luath followed by Geulo, feathering down towards the lake. They disappeared, and though Oswald followed as well as possible, he could neither see nor hear anything to guide him to their whereabouts.

So he returned to the porch door, until Lupo

and Ivan, having watered the ponies, were blown towards him. Being blown towards him may seem a strange expression, but it quite describes their method of advancing.

“Have you seen nothing of the dogs?”



“THE TWO RASCALS HAVE BEEN BEFORE THE FIRE THE WHOLE TIME.”

“No, we haven’t seen a trace of them.”

“Surely they are not lost!”

“I cannot say; I fear the worst.”

For five minutes the whole three stood staring

in the porch, Lupo yelling, Ivan shrieking, and Oswald whistling till he nearly whistled the whites of his eyes out; but the dogs made never a sign.

Then, cut to the heart for the loss of his dearly loved Luath, Oswald went inside the cave.

“O Ivan, just look here! The two rascals have been before the fire the whole time.”

Both Geulo and Luath seemed impressed by the humour of the trick they had played their masters, and while the latter grinned and laughed as only a collie can, the former tumbled on his back with his four legs in the air, to show how perfectly comfortable and happy he was.

PART IV.—A GREAT LONE LAND.

The storm continued for two long weeks. Although the wind was not always high, gale succeeded gale, and all this time the cave-dwellers had to fight a daily battle with the snow. Had they not done so, the poor ponies would have been smothered, or might have died of starvation.

Such unusual and continued toil told hard upon the health of Oswald, and one day he found himself unable to leave his hammock.

What ailed him he could not tell.

He suffered from weariness and anxiety. His limbs ached when he moved, and he hardly cared to keep his eyes open.

Something was going to happen, he assured his friend. No one would ever leave this cave alive. He had heard sailors talk of scurvy. It was a fearful disease, and all were bound to have it. The ponies would die for want of attention. It was all too horrible to think of. And so he went on.

Evidently the poor lad was very ill: but luckily Ivan had brought medicine with him, and he knew how to dispense it.

The boy's low spirits was the worst feature of the case, and was due as much, perhaps, to the darkness of the cave and constant howling of the storm-wind as to the actual hard work which the young fellow had undergone.

But victory came at last; for the storm abated, and a spell of delightful weather followed, though the frost continued hard.

Every kind of food that could be procured was prepared daintily for the sick boy, and the medicine administered thrice a day with his food.

A happier lad than Ivan when he got Oswald first out of doors there is no need to witness.

For many days Oswald needed support, for he was sadly pale and weak; but it was the fresh air that restored him to life and health, and by the end of the first week in February he was once

more able to mount a pony and go cantering round the racecourse.

* * * * *

There lay to the north and east of the camp a broad stretch of treeless, shrubless morass. It might have been called a steppe or moor, so barren and bleak was it. Boundless too, apparently, for it stretched away and away to a distant horizon that was all its own, though there were mountain peaks appearing in the limitless distance. After all, there might be no solid ground beneath the snow, and in summer all was probably a bog or moss-covered morass.

Nevertheless, when one day Lupo proposed building a lighter kind of sledge, and taking long trips across this wild steppe, the boys jumped at the idea. So tools were got out once more, and soon all hands were busy with axe and saw and hammer, and gradually the light sledge grew and grew till it became a glorious reality.

Oswald had a much greater respect now than ever for this strange wolf-man. He could not have believed that he possessed so much real skill.

The ponies were brought round one morning with their simple harness on, and whisked their tails with delight, when they found they were not to be attached to the old lumbering sledge, but to this light and elegant new one.

Away they went at last, so gaily and so fleetly that it was quite as much as even Geulo could do to keep up with them.

Luath sat beside his master in the sledge, for he never could have done the journey.

The crew of this light craft did not go unarmed; but now that more open weather had come and the days were longer, there was but little fear of another attack by wolves, for white hares had been found among the hills, and the boys had killed several ptarmigan.

This trip was in every way a pleasant one. Quite a picnic! But after driving on for about ten miles across the steppe, they swerved to the right and drove into a region of hills and lakes and forest, the most dreary and desolate that could well be imagined. Not a sign of life was here; not a track of hare or fox or wolf, and never a bird to be seen.

Yet with all its desolation it had a beauty of its own—a kind of strange, awful beauty, that struck straight to the hearts of Oswald and Ivan as they stood on a hill-top at some distance from the sledge and gazed around them.

Some might have described the country around them as one fresh, as it were, from the hands of its great Creator; but rather, in my opinion, did it resemble a scene in some old, old world but

waiting for the end, a cold dead world from which all life had long since fled. The snow-burdened trees and flattened bushes, the ice-clad rocks, the frozen lakes, the waterfalls that retained their shape still, though but masses of crystal and snow, the jagged mountains clearly defined against the sky's pale blue, all wrapped in the mantle of death and eternal silence.

Neither Oswald nor Ivan spoke for a time, and when they did, it was only in whispers, as if afraid to break the spell, or the stillness that brooded over everything.

“How grand!”

“How beautiful!”

Then by and by the horses' heads were turned homewards. But when on the very skirts of the woodlands, Lupo fed the horses; then, lighting a fire with some dry wood he had brought for the purpose, he soon had tea warmed, and all made an excellent meal.

But never while they lived, probably, would either Ivan or Oswald forget the impressiveness of the scene they had that day witnessed.

PART V.—A STRUGGLE WITH A BEAR.

This was not the last by many of such delightful picnics; and when February merged into March the woodlands began to give evidence that spring

was now not far off; and though Winter still held the trees in his icy grasp, yet even beneath the snow tiny buds were bursting out on the twig-tips of the black poplars, the birches, and on many a hardy shrub besides.

Brown bears awakened next from the caves and hollows in which they had slept all through the snow-time. They were lean and gaunt and hungry, therefore far indeed from safe.

Our heroes hunted them, nevertheless.

One day Oswald was on the range, gun in hand, and some distance from his friend. There was nothing in sight as far as the eye could reach, only here and there a dwarf pine-tree, larch or spruce, or a snow-buried juniper-bush.

It was somewhat early in the morning, and expecting no sport, although they had their rifles with them, Oswald carelessly carried his unloaded.

Suddenly he heard a bellowing, coughing roar about fifty yards ahead of him, and a huge black bear, springing from behind a rock, suddenly appeared upon the snow. Bruin had first scented and then seen what he looked upon as a very delicious breakfast sauntering slowly up towards him. He had never tasted man before, but no doubt he thought it was very delicate eating.

The roar he emitted was a defiant challenge. "Your hour is come," he seemed to tell Oswald;

“but struggle and fight a little if you choose, it will make you all the more tender.”

Then he came growling on, with his nose towards the snow, thundering as only angry bulls and bears can thunder.

Oswald saw at once how pressing his danger was, and knelt to steady his aim, in order to defend himself more surely.

He had forgotten in his confusion that the piece was unloaded; but Bruin was already within five yards of him, and crouching for a spring.

Ivan, too far away to render any assistance, saw his friend's extreme danger, and almost fainted. Oswald, “his little brother,” whom he so dearly loved, would be torn to pieces before his eyes.

But at that very moment the monster uttered a cry of anger and surprise, and, instead of springing at poor half-paralysed Oswald, he leapt round and tried to strike at something with his paw.

That something was Luath.

It is not much a collie can do against a bear, but in the Arctic regions I was once part-owner of a much smaller dog than Luath, who used to chase and bite at the legs of any white bear we might be in chase of, till, in defending himself



INSTEAD OF SPRINGING AT OSWALD, THE BEAR LEAPT ROUND
TO STRIKE AT THE DOG.

from the bold little imp—that, I need hardly say, kept well out of harm's way—Bruin would lose time and get shot.

On the present occasion this monster wheeled and struck at—nothing.

Luath was cheeking the bear just ten yards away.

“Come on,” cried Luath. “Bowff—wowff—wow. You're afraid I'd eat you. Ah, you coward!”

But the time thus spent saved Oswald. He quickly rammed home a cartridge.

The crack of his rifle rang from rock to rock, and Bruin fell. Another shot despatched him.

Do not imagine, reader, that there was the slightest lack of real courage about Ivan when I tell you that, on seeing the tables turned so unexpectedly against the bear, and his friend triumphant, a kind of cold feeling crept round his heart, and he fainted dead on the snow.

Geulo was licking his master's face and whining when, with his gun at the trail, Oswald ran up.

He rubbed Ivan's face with snow, and in a very short time the heart resumed its action and the lad opened his eyes.

He appeared dazed for a time, but soon recovered, and clasped Oswald by the hand without saying a word.

"Surely," said Ivan at last, "it was God Himself who put it into Luath's head to save you."

Luath stole softly up and licked his master's hand, a gentle caress which Oswald returned by fondly smoothing his bonny brow.

DR. GORDON STABLES.
(*Adapted.*)

COLA MONTI.

PART I.

"HERE is a new school-fellow for you, my boys," said Dr. Birch, as he entered the playground, where his pupils were assembled, leading by the hand the last addition to the flock.

Now Dr. Birch, in spite of his unfortunate name, was the very best of masters. He was by no means an old man. A tall, awkward frame; a face which could look severe, and ugly too, at times, though it was very pleasant when he smiled; and an accent in which the strong Northumbrian burr bespoke his Northern birth, complete the description of the good school-master.

The boy whom he led by the hand was about twelve years old; at least you would have thought so from his face. But he was small and slight.

His clear skin, of a pale olive, lacked the ruddy glow which shone on the cheeks of the other boys; and his large dark eyes wandered restlessly from one to the other of the frolicsome group, whose game of leap-frog had thus been interrupted.

“Now, boys, be kind to this little fellow. He has never been to school before, and he is a stranger. Never mind, my young friend, you’ll soon get acquainted with them all,” continued Dr. Birch as he patted the child’s black curls, and strode off out of the playground.

The “little fellow” stood timidly in the midst of his new play-fellows, who gathered round him like a swarm of bees.

“Well, young one!” said the biggest boy, the leader of the school: “what’s your name?”

“Niccolo Fiorentino del Monti.

“Eh! Nick what?” cried the inquirer, opening his eyes with astonishment.

“Niccolo Fiorentino del Monti,” repeated the new-comer, drawing himself up proudly, as if he thought the name both honourable and beautiful.

All the boys set up a loud laugh. “Why, what a strange fish of a foreigner the doctor has caught!” cried one.

“My little fellow, we shall have to teach you English,” said another, taking the child by the

arm. But Niccolo angrily shook off the rude touch; and the warm Italian blood rushed to his dark cheek, as he answered with a foreign accent, but distinctly enough to be understood. "Thank you, I can speak English; my mother taught me: she came from your country."

"Oh! she was an Englishwoman, was she?" said Morris Woodhouse, the head boy; "and I suppose she married some poor Italian fiddler?"

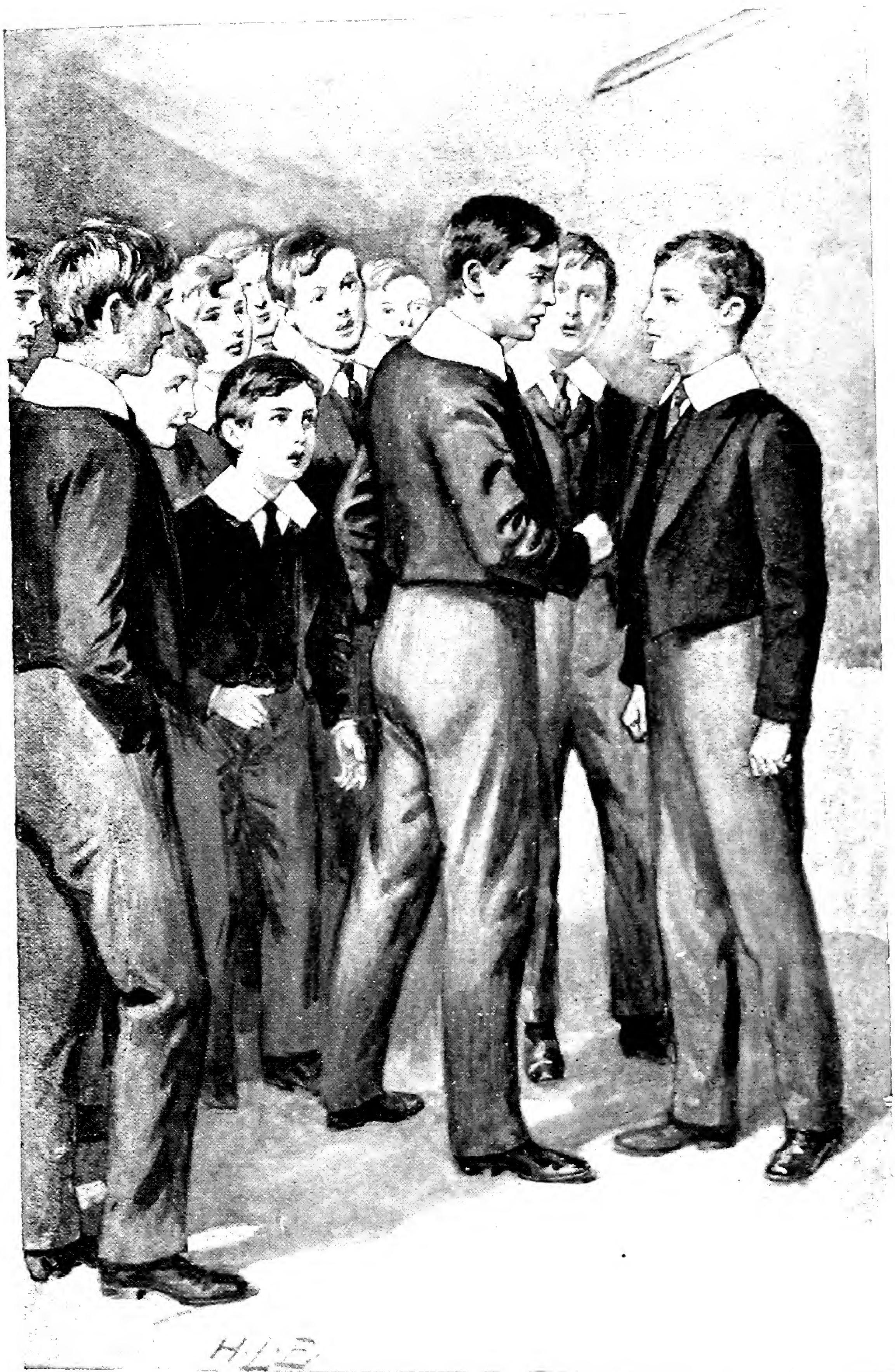
"My father was no fiddler," cried Niccolo, his black eyes flashing. "He was a count, and his family were princes once, and I come of the noble family of the Monti."

"Bravo! my little prince!" said Morris, laughing loudly. "And how happened it that your small lordship condescended to come over here?"

"Because my father died, and—— But I will not answer any more questions: you are very cruel to me, you rude English boys, *ragazzacci Inglesi*."¹

"I suppose *rag*—what's the rest of it?—means *rascal*; and I should like to know how any imp of a foreigner dare call me 'rascal.' Mind what you are about," said Morris, flourishing his stick very near little Niccolo's head. The other boys

¹ Pronounced *ragatsat'chee inglai'see*, meaning "very rude English."



COLI MONTE THE QUARREL



THE BOY EXAMINED THE INTERESTED ROOMS TO THE WHITE LAY OF

looked on, not daring to interfere with one who, by his cleverness and his fighting powers, had got to be leader in the school-room and tyrant in the playground. At last, one of the later comers, who did not stand so much in fear of him, took hold of Morris's arm.

"Come, come, Woodhouse! you are playing the same game with this youngster that you did with me a month ago; and I must say it's rather cowardly, considering he is such a little fellow."

"Don't interfere, my lad," said the big boy, with a patronising air. "I'm the king of the school, as you very well know. You have not forgotten the thrashing I gave you, Archibald M'Kaye? Walk off, will you? and let me finish this small frog of a Frenchman."

"I am no Frenchman! I am an Italian! and that is quite as good as a great ugly bad Englishman, like you!" cried Niccolo fiercely, ending his speech with a torrent of Italian.

Morris was now thoroughly enraged; and the uplifted stick would have fallen heavily on the child's head, had not Archibald caught it, and turned it aside.

"Won't you hear reason, Morris, and let that boy alone?" he said.

"Hear reason! hear reason from you, you long

solemn-faced Scotch fellow! You preach reason to me! Get away, or I'll thrash you again!"

"Try!" said Archibald quietly: while a faint murmur of "Shame!" arose from some of the boys; and Niccolo crept behind his brave defender, and peeped over his shoulder at the king of the school.

"Do you mean to say you'll fight me again?" said the latter, somewhat surprised at M'Kaye's resolute attitude.

"I will, if you don't treat this lad civilly. Why should he be bullied because he happens to be a foreigner, and a stranger?"

"A *sthramer* indeed!" said Morris, mimicking Archibald's Scotch accent. "And so you intend to fight his battles, because he is a *sthramer*, like yourself?"

"I do." Archibald was always a quiet boy, and one of few words.

The two lads took off their jackets and prepared for a regular combat, school-boy fashion, to settle the point. Before they began, M'Kaye turned round to the others.

"Now, fellows, you all see what I am fighting for: just doing for this youngster what some of you should have done for me when I came; instead of which, you all set to work abusing me. Morris beat me before; we'll see if he does this time. Now, man, go at it as soon as you like."

COLA MONTI.

PART II.

Archibald threw his spare but active figure into a posture of defence ; and looked what he was—a fine, bold lad, from the land which has sent out so many bold lads—the land of Wallace and of Bruce.

The boys formed the circle, and “Bravo, Morris!” “Try it again, Mac!” showed the deep interest they took in the combat. It was a trial of right against might ; and many of those who had suffered from Morris’s overbearing ways were only withheld, by the still doubtful result of the battle, from showing how strongly they felt with the only one of them all who had dared to oppose justice to tyranny.

Meanwhile the little Italian crept away, and wondered if every English welcome were like this, and whether English boys always fought so fiercely. The poor little fellow’s thoughts went back to his own sunny garden, where he used to lounge away all day under the orange-trees, with the clear sky of Rome above him, and his nurse beside him, with her soft Italian ditties. Then he woke from this dream to find himself in the dull playground, with its high walls shutting out everything but the grey English sky.

The fight ended as battles do not always end—the right won. Archibald's skilful wrestling gained the victory over Morris's heavy blows, and the latter was laid prostrate on the ground. Half the boys raised a cry of triumph; the others were still too much afraid of their fallen enemy, and kept a doubtful silence. M'Kaye lifted up his adversary, and saw that he was not hurt, and then was well content to let him retire with a few friends to wash his face, and remove all traces of the battle before he met the doctor's eye.

"Your man has won, my little fellow," said one of the boys, clapping Niccolo on the shoulder. "O be joyful! you won't get any more abuse from Morris Woodhouse. Mac has fought it out for you. Are you not much obliged to him?"

"I am, indeed I am!" cried the young Italian; and he ran to Archibald, seized his hand, kissed it, and poured forth a torrent of thanks.

But Archibald drew his hand away, for he saw the other boys beginning to laugh.

"There, that will do, you need not say so much; I only fought for you because you were too little to fight for yourself. Only mind not to quarrel with Morris another time."

The warm-hearted Italian shrunk back, with the tears standing in his eyes. He did not speak

to M'Kaye again until the dinner-bell had rung, and all the other boys had rushed into the house. Archibald stayed behind, rubbing the mud from his jacket, when Niccolo crept up to him, and offered to help. "What, little one, is that you?" said M'Kaye. "Come, then; you may as well help to set me to rights again."

"I should have come before, but that I thought you were angry with me."

"Angry! Oh, no! Only I did not quite like being made a fool of before the boys. We don't kiss people's hands here: but I suppose it was only your Italian fashion."

"I cannot do anything right!" sighed the poor child. "Ah, England is a strange place! I shall never be happy again."

"Oh, you will in time, when you have got accustomed to us all. But come, little fellow, we'll go in to dinner."

"I am afraid."

"What are you afraid of? Morris won't eat you. Come."

But the child still hung back, and at last burst into tears. "I am so miserable. Oh that I could go home!"

There was something in the boy's desolate condition which touched Archibald's heart. He thought of his own far-off home, and felt com-

passion for the poor Italian thus alone in a strange land. He laid his hand on Niccolo's shoulder, and his voice lost its schoolboy roughness.

"Don't cry, there's a good fellow, don't now! I'll take care of you. We are both strangers here; and we'll fight our way together. Come, we shall be friends, I know."

Niccolo dried his tears, and looked gratefully in the face of the elder boy.

"There, now, that's right," said M'Kaye. "Be a man, my little fellow. And, by the by, what shall I call you? I'll never remember that fine-sounding name of yours."

The other smiled. "My nurse used to call me Nicoletto; is that too long?"

Archibald shook his head: "I am afraid it is. Besides, the boys will laugh at it. Well, can't you think of another name? You seemed to have plenty to spare."

"My father always called me Cola; and I like that name best, too."

"Cola—that will do very well. And now, Cola, let me give you one piece of advice: say as little as you can about your father the count, and the princes your ancestors, and all that sort of thing; you will only get laughed at for it here. That is the first thing for you to remember; and I'll tell you a few others by and by. Now let us go in to dinner."



"NICCOLO CREPT UP TO HIM AND OFFERED TO HELP."

COLA MONTI.

PART III.

It is astonishing what an effect one good example has sometimes. When Cola was again left in the power of his new school-mates, during the hour between supper and bedtime, no one attempted to ill-treat him, or ventured more than a few harmless jokes at his foreign accent and manners. True, these were very annoying to the boy, who was alike proud and shy, and more than once he looked earnestly at his protector M'Kaye; but Archibald seemed not disposed to extend his championship further than was necessary, and he quietly left Cola to make his own way, and find his own level.

Morris Woodhouse sat sullenly aloof. His authority had been shaken for the first time, and he felt humbled. The "king of the school" trembled on his throne.

Still Morris was not, on the whole, a bad boy. There were some few in the school who rather liked him than otherwise; for he had a careless generosity, and, moreover, being a rich man's son, had the means to exercise it. The lovers of cake and playthings always stood by Morris, and those meek-tempered boys, who would give

way to anybody, declared that he was a good fellow, so long as you did not contradict him.

These gathered round their fallen master, while the more sturdy and independent sided with M'Kaye. Both parties went to bed, each in great anger with the other. Nobody thought of playing off on young Cola the usual tricks. Consequently the Italian crept into his bed without finding the blankets sewed up, or a furze-bush for his bed-fellow, or some other trick for making a newcomer as miserable as possible. And thus passed Cola's first day at school.

It was a great and painful change to the young foreigner, from the pleasant southern home to the restraints of an English school. The long hours of study were very tiring to him; more especially as he then felt most acutely his own ignorance. His class-fellows were the youngest boys in the school; and Cola's idle habits seemed to foretell that it would be a long time before he got above them.

Every day he cried over the easiest lessons; and then the other boys laughed at him, until, roused to anger, he was well-nigh playing towards his junior class-mates the same part which Morris Woodhouse had tried to exercise against himself.

Sometimes, in his distress, Cola would go to his old friend Archibald. But M'Kaye had work

enough of his own; though diligent and hard-working, he was not a quick boy, and it annoyed him to be disturbed.

"Get some one else to help you, Cola," he would say. "Why don't you go to Morris? He always does his lessons quickly, and has plenty of time to spare."

But Cola would rather have endured Dr. Birch's cane every day of his life, than have been indebted to Morris for anything under the sun. All his fierce Italian nature was roused in hatred of the boy who had insulted him. Long after the quarrel had been healed, and the result of Archibald's battle only remained in the better behaviour of Woodhouse towards his schoolmates, Cola nourished his wrath in secret, and lost no opportunity of showing it.

And with these feelings of personal dislike were mingled others, which might almost be said to take their rise in the best parts of his nature. The more Cola loved Archibald, the more he hated Morris. These two boys seemed born rivals in everything. M'Kaye's steady perseverance kept pace with Morris's cleverness; and while the latter was first in the class, Archibald always contrived to be second.

The same rivalry extended to the playground, where Woodhouse for the first time found an

opponent equal in strength and activity. Strange to say, while the whole school was divided by this feeling for the two boys, the two leaders got on very well together. The reason of this was probably that M'Kaye was a quiet sort of fellow, who did not much care to get the upper hand, provided he was not trampled upon; and, too, because Morris's easy-going good temper was not proof against Archibald's frank rivalry.

But all this did not hinder the others from many a battle on the subject of their two companions; and of all the boys, Cola Monti was the warmest. Every triumph of Morris's over Archibald stung him to keenest anger; every wrong done to his friend he resented like an insult to himself. The little Italian would have done anything to injure Morris or to serve Archibald.

M'Kaye took all this stormy affection with the quietness of his nature. It was pleasant to find his books arranged, his room put in order, and his lightest wishes attended to. Now and then he thanked his little friend with a good-humoured smile and a kindly word.

Thus the half-year passed, and with the midsummer holidays drew near the examination which was the grand event of the school year.

COLA MONTI.

PART IV.

“Why are you working away so hard, Archy?” whispered Cola, as he came into the school-room, in the dusk of the evening, and found M’Kaye in the midst of his books. “Do come; we are having such a good game of cricket.”

“I can’t! really I can’t! Now do go away, and leave me to finish this Greek exercise. You know it is for the examination to-morrow.”

“I thought you had done all your work?”

“Yes, this is the last page of the book: I must finish it. Here, fetch me that lexicon, and be off with you.”

Cola brought the book; but instead of going away, he sat down quietly on the form opposite, and watched Archibald, who was at work so hard that he hardly seemed to notice his presence.

“It’s no use; I can see no longer, and my head aches terribly,” M’Kaye said at last.

“How much have you left undone?” asked Cola.

“Only three lines, which I can do to-morrow morning.”

“Then come out and play.”

But Archy stretched himself wearily on the bench. "No, no! I am so tired; and my head is quite stupid with thinking about to-morrow. I wonder, Cola, how I shall stand at this Greek examination! There's Woodhouse, and Williams, and Champion against me."

"They are all below you, as everyone agrees."

"No, not Morris Woodhouse. Ah! he is so clever. And yet, I have worked so hard; and I did wish for the Greek prize: it would please my father very much. But Morris is sure to get it. Well, it cannot be helped."

Cola clenched his small hands, and bit his lips; the very thought of Morris's gaining such a triumph was scarcely bearable. "Archy," said he, "how do you know that? How can you be sure that Morris will get the Greek prize?"

"Because the doctor is so particular about exercises, and Woodhouse's are always so good: that will be the turning-point, for certain."

Just at this moment, the quiet school-room was entered by a group of merry lads.

"What, not done yet, M'Kaye!" cried one.

"I've done all my work!" "And I!" "And I!" echoed several others.

"Now for it, let us see which is the best, Woodhouse or M'Kaye! Here's M'Kaye's exercise-book. Now, Morris, let's have yours."

"I have a good deal to do at mine yet," answered Morris carelessly.

"Ah! that's just like you! you always leave everything to the last."

"Because nothing gives me any trouble. I can do in five minutes what would take you fellows an hour," said Woodhouse, with a smile which made Archy bite his lips in anger, and brought a throng of violent feelings to the heart of little Cola.

"Well, well! out with your exercise-books and let us compare them."

"Well, except that Woodhouse is the head boy, and has been longest at school, I should think the doctor would be puzzled to decide," acknowledged Forster, one of Morris's own admirers: "it's neck and neck."

"But Morris's last exercise is not done yet," said one on M'Kaye's side. "If he should fail, you are sure of the prize, Archy."

"Don't trouble yourselves, my lads," said Morris loftily: "I am quite easy about the matter myself."

"Well, take up your books, you fellows, and let us leave the affair to the doctor," observed one of the wisest of the group, who saw that the discussion was likely to become unpleasantly warm.

"I shall leave mine here, and get up half

an hour earlier to-morrow to finish it," said Morris, tossing the exercise-book down carelessly, and walking away, the picture of self-satisfaction. He had too good an opinion of his own merits to feel any anxiety.

There were many sleepless eyes and excited hearts that night in the various dormitories where the doctor's young flock were ranged. But of all these restless young hearts, none beat so violently as that of Cola. The little Italian turned over in his mind every possible plan for effecting the downfall of his enemy and the triumph of his friend.

Accustomed from his childhood to hear revenge talked of as a virtue, especially when exercised on behalf of one both dear and injured, Cola never thought for a moment that he was doing anything wrong in thus plotting against his school-fellow. When at last he hit upon a plan which seemed likely to serve his purpose, he leaped out of bed and danced about for joy, so that the wakeful Archibald called to him from the next bed to know what was the matter.

As soon as day began to peep, Cola rose, dressed himself, and crept quietly down to the school-room. He hunted in the dim light for the exercise-books which had been put away the night before; and seizing Morris's, he jumped out of the low window, and ran like lightning through the garden



"COLA FASTENED THE STONE AND THE BOOK TOGETHER, AND
SANK THEM IN THE POND."

to a paddock belonging to the house, where there was a small pond.

The young conspirator had laid his plans very cleverly. He found a heavy stone, took some strong twine out of his pocket, and carefully fastened the stone and the book together ; then he deliberately sank them both to the bottom of the pond.

As Cola saw the book disappear, he clapped his hands. If it had been Morris himself, instead of his exercise-book, that he saw sinking beneath the slimy waters of the pond, the revengeful boy would almost have done the same. And yet even then, his strong and unselfish affection half excused the wickedness of such thoughts.

“ Archibald, dear ! ” he murmured in his Italian tongue, which he used when excited, “ it is for you ! ”

A rustling in the bushes, probably of some early bird, startled him ; he fled back to the house, and crept into bed again just as the first sunshine of a midsummer morning lighted up his room.

COLA MONTI.

PART V.

Morris did not rise until there were but a few minutes left of the half-hour which he had allowed himself to finish the exercise. Then the book, of

course, could not be found. He searched everywhere, he blamed everybody, but all to no purpose.

Meanwhile, Cola stood silent and aloof, his triumphant eye alone showing how keen was his delight in the scene. Only once he crept quietly up to Archibald, who sat finishing the last line of his task, scarcely taking heed of what was going on.

"Archy!" whispered he; "do you hear? You will win the prize now. Are you not glad?"

"Hush!" said M'Kaye, when he understood the state of affairs. "Don't be so ungenerous, Cola." And he went up to Morris and tried to assist in the search; but the other pushed him away angrily.

"Get away," he said; "I know you are glad, as I should be, if I were in your place," was all the answer of the disappointed boy.

Archibald's face flushed, and he turned back. If Cola had then asked him, "Are you glad?" he could not honestly have replied "No!" It would have been against human nature—against boyish nature, most certainly.

The breakfast-bell rang, and all was over with poor Morris, for immediately afterwards the examination began. There was no hope for the unfortunate leader in Dr. Birch's angry brow;

for when he learned the state of the case, the schoolmaster at once put down the loss of the book to carelessness. It annoyed him; he was proud of his clever pupil, who had always done credit to the school. But there could be no doubt that the Greek prize was justly M'Kaye's.

"It might have been yours still, even had Woodhouse not lost his book," said the master, as he examined the exercises before him. "You have done very well, M'Kaye, and deserve your success: but I wish the contest could have been quite on fair ground."

"Are you not happy now?" whispered the little Italian to his friend. "Look at Morris: see, he is white with rage. Oh, how glad I am! Are not you, Archy?"

There was a look on M'Kaye's face that was not like perfect happiness. He was at once too honest and too proud to be quite contented with such a doubtful triumph. And when the boys gathered round to see his prize, a beautiful silver inkstand, there was a jeering smile in the faces of some of Morris's friends that vexed Archy to the quick. He answered Cola rather roughly, "Don't tease me, Cola. I am not glad; and revenge is very dishonourable. I don't want to be talked to. Go away."

Cola looked at him with a mixture of surprise

and anger, but he did not speak until they were both alone in the school-room. Then he said, "You are angry, you send me away; and yet you do not know what I have done for you."

"Nonsense, I think you are more pleased at being revenged on Morris than even at my getting the prize."

Cola drew up his slight small figure, and a world of feeling flashed from his dark eyes. "You are right, Archy. I am glad to be revenged: every one is—in my country."

Archibald turned away in disgust at this admission. "I tell you, Cola, if you do not take care, you will come to be hanged," he said.

"Shall I? I don't care!" cried the excited boy. "And you, Archy, you talk so to me, when I did it all for your sake."

"All what?"

"I was determined you should have the prize; so I tied a stone to Morris's book, and I sank it into the pond."

Archibald looked at his companion wonderingly, then muttered, "How dared you do it? Are you not ashamed of yourself?"

"Not in the least. I loved you and I hated him; so I did what I could and I got what I wanted."

Archibald, utterly disgusted, sank down on a

seat, and remained for several minutes without uttering a word. It was a trying position for the boy to be placed in. He had struggled so hard to win this prize; he felt that he deserved it; and yet every honourable feeling he had, rebelled against keeping that which had been gained by a mean trick.

Then, on the other hand, if he declared the truth, it would heap disgrace upon Cola, who had done this wrong chiefly through love of himself. While Archibald's reason condemned the act, his feelings whispered that it was not so bad after all. And no one would ever know it; and it would please his father so much to see the bright silver inkstand.

While M'Kaye's thoughts took this turn, he lifted up his eyes to the so-longed-for treasure; they rested on the doctor's favourite motto, which he had caused to be engraved on it—"Truth above all things." Then he made up his mind.

"It is of no use, I cannot keep it!" cried he; and without another look at his prize, he rushed out of the room. Cola heard his steps along the hall, his knock at the doctor's study door, and felt that all was over. The plan of revenge had failed.

COLA MONTI.

PART VI.

In the afternoon the boys were startled from their holiday sports by a general summons to Dr. Birch's study. All went with considerable surprise: Cola in fear and anger. For a long time he could not believe that Archibald had really betrayed him.

"Boys," said the schoolmaster, in his gravest tones, "I have sent for you to speak about a story I have heard about the prize. You all know that it was given to Archibald M'Kaye, in consequence of Morris Woodhouse's book having been lost. Now M'Kaye, with an honesty which I am sure you will respect as much as I do, tells me that the book was lost intentionally; in fact, taken by another school-fellow, who meant to injure Woodhouse. Who this boy is M'Kaye has begged me not to inquire: and for his sake I have promised not to punish him.

"Now, what I wish to say is this: that as honesty, justice and truth are above all, I have accepted M'Kaye's resignation of his prize. Although it cannot be given to Woodhouse, it will remain in my hands for competition at the next half-year. And as to the unknown culprit, I leave him to the reproaches of his own

conscience ; but I shall carefully watch the conduct of every one of you."

This speech was listened to in dead silence : the boys looked at one another in wonder and suspicion.

"I did not do it, sir !" "Nor I ! cried several of them.

"Silence !" answered the master. "I want no confessions, I accuse no one ; but I wish all of you to know how much I respect M'Kaye, and how I consider a truthful, honest act far more creditable to him than a prize. Now, boys, you may go."

The boys were about to obey, when a knock came to the study door : it was a lad from the village, who said he wished to speak to the doctor.

"Very well. You can go, boys," said the schoolmaster.

"Please, zur," said the lad, grinning, "it's about them I comed to speak. One on' em has lost a book, I reckon ; I've found it." And he laid on the table, still fastened to the stone, and thoroughly soaked with water, the very exercise-book which the young Italian had hidden so carefully.

Cola trembled, and could have wished to sink through the floor—anywhere out of the doctor's piercing eye.



A LAD FROM THE VILLAGE SAID HE WISHED TO SPEAK TO
THE DOCTOR.

“Where did you find this, young man?” was the doctor’s stern inquiry.

“At the bottom of the pond in your field, zur. I was there this morning, bird-nesting, please your honour, which I hope you won’t take ill, as I didn’t mean any mischief.”

“Go on,” said the doctor.

“And there I seed one of your young gentlemen coming with something in his hand; and he tied it to a stone and flung it into the water. Then he talked some nonsense, and scampered off. I thought somehow he might be mad, so I fished the bundle up again, and brought it here.”

The doctor gravely untied the string, and found it to be indeed the lost book. “Are you sure that it was one of the boys at my school?”

“Aye, zur, sure enough; for there he is,” cried the lad, and his finger pointed out Cola.

Boiling with anger, the Italian rushed at the village lad, and shook his tiny fist in his face.

“Poor young gentleman!” said the fellow. “I be sure he’s gone mad.”

“Oh, sir,” cried Archibald in great distress. “Please don’t punish him. He is disgraced enough.”

“He is indeed,” said Dr. Birch, as he glanced towards where Cola stood, and having dismissed the village lad, saw how all the boys

had moved away from him. "Sneak" and "Cheat" were murmured on every side.

"It now only remains to decide about the prize," added the schoolmaster, turning over the wet leaves of the book.

"Let Morris have it, sir," at once said Archibald; and the boys seconded the request. But Morris objected.

"I don't care much about the prize now. But, I tell you, Archy, you are a regular good fellow, and I'm very much obliged to you; shake hands!" And he gave his former rival such a hearty grip that it made Archibald's eyes water.

"This is my decision about the inkstand," observed Dr. Birch. "It shall be given to nobody, but placed on the school-room mantelpiece, as a reminder and a warning to you all."

"Bravo, that's quite right, thank you, sir!" cried the boys, hardly restrained from expressing their feelings in a downright hurrah.

"Stay a moment, boys," said the master. Then he called, "Niccolo Monti."

Trembling, crimson and pale by turns, the boy came forward.

"Niccolo Monti," said the doctor, "if I were to punish you, I should break my word, which I never do; and besides, I should inflict pain upon M'Kaye. Your only excuse is, that you

did this partly out of affection for him. You have escaped punishment; but I command you to ask pardon of Morris, here, before all your school-fellows."

The angry spirit of old shone in Cola's eyes, and he stood hesitating. But Morris showed a kindness that astonished everyone.

"Come, Cola," he said, "you need not ask my pardon; I'll forgive you; you are only a little fellow. I'll treat you better in future, and then perhaps you won't hate me so much. Shake hands, will you?"

And another of Morris's rough grasps was bestowed on his younger enemy. It touched Cola's quick feelings more than any punishment could have done.

"Thank you, Woodhouse," said he, in a low sorrowful tone, and then rushed upstairs and shut himself up in his own room. He had received a lesson which he never forgot while he lived.

*By the Author of
"John Halifax, Gentleman."*

THE CRUISE OF THE "TIGER."

(FROM THE MANX.)

THE patriot sons of Mona, great Buonaparte to whip,
Subscribed to buy the "Tiger," an ancient battle-ship,
Big Harry Qualtrough voted the Captain of her crew,
And fiercely from her topmast our three-legged ensign flew.

"Oh ! pity for our daughters," the farmers all did say,
 "If cruel Boney slaughters their lovers far away !"
 "Cheer up, cheer up, sad sweethearts, and fear not for our
 lives ;
 For soon with gold and glory we're back to make you
 wives."

Three days away from Ramsey, upon the briny deep,
 A fearful storm o'er-took us, which made our flesh to creep ;
 But when its force abated, a Frenchman we descried,
 With merchandise full freighted, before us on the tide.

We called her to surrender ; escape at first she tries ;
 But soon we overhauled her, and took her for our prize ;
 Yet little conversation prevailed between us two,
 For she'd no Manx or English, and we no "parley voo."

Safe home at last at Ramsey we made the "Tiger" roar,
 And Governor and Council came out to us from shore ;
 But our Frenchman they no-such-man upon inquiry found,
 But just a friendly Dutchman, whose crew we'd robbed
 and bound.

To England they removed us, before whose Court we went,
 Who tried and proved us pirates, altho' without intent ;
 And sold away the "Tiger" to indemnify the Dutch ;
 Then to our scornful sweethearts returned us mourning
 much.

Ye Manxmen all, who ponder the meaning of my rhyme,
 Take warning by the "Tiger," be prudent in good time !
 And ere you venture taking a French or Yankee craft,
 Be sure that you're not raking a Dutchman fore and aft.

A. P. GRAVES.

STATION JIM'S CAREER.

"DOG JIM" was first brought to Slough station, near Windsor, when he was about three months old. At that time he was like a ball of wool, and could be carried in one's overcoat pocket.

The first trick taught him was to get over the stairs of the footbridge at the station. So well did he learn his first lesson, that he never once crossed the metals from the time he was brought here to the time of his death.

He began his duties as canine collector for the Great Western Railway Widows and Orphans' Fund when he was about four months old, and although, owing to bad health, he was only collecting about two years or a little more, he managed to place about £40 to the account of the Fund.

He only once had a piece of gold put in his box ; that was half a sovereign. On several occasions half-crowns were found in his box, but most of the coins he collected were pennies and halfpennies. After a time, he was taught to bark whenever he received a coin, which little recognition caused a great deal of amusement to his patrons.

One Sunday, during the summer of 1896, a Hospital Parade was organised at Southall, and his trainer was asked to take him up there to collect.

This was done, and the result of his visit was that, when his boxes were opened, 263 coins were found in them. There were only five pieces of silver out of that number; so when it is remembered that he barked for each coin given him, this must be regarded as a good afternoon's work.



STATION JIM.

His railway journeys were few in number. On one occasion he went to Leamington; that was his longest ride. Another time he got into a train, and went to Paddington, but being noticed by one of the guards, he was promptly sent back again.

Another day he got into a train and was taken to Windsor. The officials saw him, and wanted to put him in the next train to send him home, but he would not agree to that, and set out to walk back, and this he did, being noticed by a good many people as he went through Eton.

He knew a great many amusing tricks. He would sit up and beg, or lie down and "die"; he could make a bow when asked, or would stand up on his hind legs. When told to get up and sit in a chair, he would do so, and looked quite at home with a pipe in his mouth and a cap upon his head.

He would express his feeling in a very noisy manner when he heard any music, barking furiously, as many dogs do when they hear a band or barrel organ in the street. If anyone threw a lighted match or a piece of lighted paper on the ground, he would put it out, and growl while doing so.

If a ladder were placed against the wall, he would climb it. He would play "leap frog" with the boys; and he would escort them off the station if told to do so, but he would never bite them.

At a St. John's Ambulance Examination, held at Slough station, he lay down on one of the stretchers, and allowed himself to be bandaged

up with the rest of the "injured." He was also a splendid swimmer and a capital house-dog.

He died suddenly in his harness on the platform on the evening of November 19, 1896. His body was afterwards stuffed and placed in a glass case in Slough station, where it may still be seen; the money for the purpose was collected from a number of residents in Slough and members of the staff at the station.

Only a dog, but a favourite of all,
He ever was ready at duty's call;
And though his brief life is now at an end,
He is still the Widows and Orphans' friend.

A RED-SKIN TRAITOR CHASE.

[This describes the adventures of George Maxby in the Great North West, and more especially when engaged in the pursuit of the traitorous Red Indian Attick, who had carried off, against her will, Waboose (Eve Liston), the daughter of William Liston, an American backwoodsman, and a beautiful Indian girl, who was the sister of Big Otter, a noble chief.]

PART I.

WE must turn away now, for a short time, to another, though not far distant, part of the Great Nor'-West.

It is a more open country than that immediately around Fort Wichikagan, and lies to the south of it. Here and there long stretches of prairie cut



ARTHUR CHIO-F.

"THE RED-SKINS WERE IN THE MIDST OF THE SNORTING HOSTS."



up the wilderness, giving to the landscape a soft and park-like appearance.

The scenery is further varied by beautiful lakelets, which swarm with waterfowl, for the season has changed, early spring having already swept away the white mantle of winter, and spread the green robes of nature over the land.

In the midst of one of the stretches of rolling prairie-land great herds of buffalo are scattered in groups, browsing with all the air of security peculiar to domestic cattle.

Happily their memories are short. They seem prone to enjoy the present, forgetful of the past and regardless of the future; happily, I say, for those humpy and hairy creatures are not unacquainted with man's devices—the sudden surprise, the twang of the red man's bow, and the crack of the hunter's rifle.

It was the forenoon of a splendid day when this peaceful scene was broken in upon. A little cloud of dust on the horizon was the first indication of the approach of hunters, and an old buffalo bull was first among the thousands of innocents to observe the cloud. It stirred the memory of other days within his deep bosom, and sent a thrill through his huge frame, which, ending in his tail, caused it to tremble and curl slightly upwards. At the same time he emitted softly a low rumble,

which might have served for the bass of a cathedral organ.

By degrees the cloud came nearer and enlarged. At the same moment the groups of buffaloes drew together, and began to gaze, perchance to remember! The patriarch became excited, wriggled his tail, which was ridiculously small for his body, pawed the ground, trotted hither and thither, and commenced playing on all the deeper notes of his organ.

At last there could be no doubt. The two-legged monsters came on, mounted on four-legged brutes, which began to trot as the distance between them grew less. This was enough. The patriarch tossed his haunches to the sky, all but wriggled off his tail, gave utterance to a bursting bellow, and went scouring over the plains like a gigantic pig. The entire buffalo host, performing a similar toss and wriggle, followed close on his heels.

At this the Red-skins put their steeds to the gallop, but did not at once overtake their prey. Clumsy though their gait was, the buffaloes were swift and strong, causing the whole plain to resound under their mighty tread. Indian steeds, however, are wiry and enduring. By slow degrees they lessened the distance between them, both pursued and pursuers lengthening out their ranks as the "fittest" came to the front. Thundering

on, they approached one of the large clumps of woodland with which the plain was covered, as with islets. The patriarch led to the left of it. The savages, sweeping aside, took to the right.

The sudden disappearance of the pursuers seemed to surprise the patriarch, who slackened his pace a little, and, lifting his shaggy head, looked right and left inquiringly. "Was it all a dream?" he thought, no doubt.

If he thought it was, he received in a few minutes a rude awakening, for the Red-skins came sweeping round the other end of the clump of trees, yelling like fiends, brandishing their weapons, and urging their steeds to the utmost.

To snort, bellow, turn off abruptly, and scurry along faster than ever, was the work of a moment, but it was too late! The Red-skins were in the midst of the snorting host. Bows were bent, and guns were levelled. The latter were smooth-bores, cheap, and more or less inaccurate, but that mattered not.

Where the range was only two or three yards, guns and bows were true enough for the end in view. At such work even bad shots met their reward. Arrows sank to the feathers; bullets penetrated to the heart, or shattered the bones. Ere long, numerous black lumps on the prairie told of death to the quadrupeds and success to the bipeds.

A RED-SKIN TRAITOR CHASE.

PART II.

That same evening two of the Indians stood on a hillock, a little apart from their camp, where smoking fires and roasting meat and marrow bones, and ravenously feeding men, women and children formed a scene that was interesting, though not refined. One of the Indians referred to was Big Otter. The other was Musk-rat, the old chief of his tribe.

"Does my father not know?" said Big Otter respectfully, "that Attick plans mischief against the Pale-faces of Wichikagan?"

"No, Big Otter," returned the old chief, with a scowl; "Musk-rat does not know that, but he hears."

"It is true," rejoined Big Otter sternly. "His plan is to attack the fort by night, kill the Pale-faces, and carry off the goods."

"Big Otter's ears are sharp," continued Musk-rat. "How did he come to hear of Attick's intentions?"

The younger Indian paused thoughtfully before replying.

"Waboose told me," he said.

"Does the daughter of Weeum the Good hold conversation with evil spirits?" asked the old chief, with a slight raising of the eyebrows.



"ATTICK FOLLOWED IN ANOTHER CANOE. BUT KEPT FAR
BEHIND."

“Not willingly, but evil spirits force themselves upon the daughter of Weeum the Good. My father knows that Attick is proud and ambitious. He wishes to mate with Waboose.”

“Yes, I knew he was proud, but I did not know he was so great a fool,” replied the old chief scornfully.

“My father knows,” continued Big Otter, “that when the Pale-face chief went and brought Waboose back to Fort Wichikagan, Attick was staying there in his wigwam by the lake. The big chief of the Pale-faces, who fears nothing, had forgiven him. Attick went to Waboose, and offered to take her to his wigwam; but the daughter of Weeum the Good turned away from him. Attick is proud, and he is fierce. He told Waboose that he would kill all the Pale-faces. Although a fool, he does not boast. Waboose knew that he was in earnest. She went to the Pale-face Muxbee [by which name Big Otter styled my humble self], and told him all, for she has set her heart on Muxbee.”

“Did she tell you so?” asked Musk-rat sharply.

“No; but the blue eyes of Waboose tell tales. They are like a kettle with holes in the bottom; they cannot hold secrets. They spoke to Attick as well as to me, and he became jealous. He vowed he would take the scalp of Muxbee. One

day, soon after the lake was clear of ice, Muxbee asked Waboose to go with him in a canoe to the valley at the head of Lake Wichikagan. Attick followed in another canoe, but kept far behind. They did not know it was Attick; Waboose found it out afterwards. Muxbee did not talk to Waboose of love. The ways of the Pale-faces are strange.

“Once I thought that Muxbee liked Waboose, and that, perhaps, he might wed with her, and stay with us as the Good Weeum did, but I doubt it now. He only asked her to take him to the stunted pine where her father was so fond of going with her. When there he went looking here and there about the rocks, and found a splendid thing—I know not what—but Waboose told me it shone and sparkled like the stars. Beside it was a bag of the yellow round things that the Pale-faces love so much. He told her he had expected to find these things, but she must not ask him questions just then; he would tell her afterwards. I suppose he is a great medicine-man, and holds speech with the spirit-world.”

Big Otter paused thoughtfully a few seconds, and then continued:—

“When he was putting these things in his breast, Waboose caught sight of Attick among

the bushes, and pointed him out. Muxbee sprang up, and levelled his gun with the two pipes at him, but did not fire. Attick fled and they saw him no more."

"Did Waboose tell Big Otter all this?" asked the old chief.

"Yes. Waboose has no secrets from her mother's brother."

"And why has Big Otter left the Pale-faces, and brought Waboose away from them?" asked Musk-rat.

"Because he fears for the Pale-faces that Attick will kill them and carry off Waboose. By bringing Waboose here with us we draw Attick along with us away from the Pale-faces, and as long as Waboose is in our camp, she is safe. Attick dare not harm her."

A gleam of thought lit up the dark features of the old chief as he said "Waugh!" with much satisfaction.

"Did Muxbee not care when Big Otter carried Waboose away?" asked the old man.

"He did not know she was going, and I did not tell her she was not to return. I took her away with her mother when Muxbee was out hunting. I told the big Pale-face chief that I must go with my tribe to hunt the buffalo in the south, and that they must go with me. He was

very unwilling to let them go at first, but I was resolved, and Waboose is a good, obedient girl."

A RED-SKIN TRAITOR CHASE.

PART III.

That night two events occurred in the Red-skin camp which caused a good deal of surprise and commotion.

The first was the sudden disappearance of Waboose and her mother. They had been gone some time, of course, before any one thought of suspecting flight. The moment that suspicion was aroused, however, Big Otter went straight to the wigwam of Attick. It was deserted! He knew well the bad and weak men of the tribe, who were led and swayed by Attick. Hurrying to their tents, he found that these also had fled. This was enough.

"Masqua," he said to the first Indian he chanced to meet at the moment of quitting the last wigwam, "Attick has carried off Waboose. Assemble some of the young men. Choose only the strong, and those whose horses are swift. Go yourself with your son Mozwa; gallop round the camp till you find in which direction they have gone, and then return to me at the council tent and wait."

Masqua understood the value of prompt obedience. Without a word of reply he turned and bounded away.

Big Otter hurried to the council tent, where old Musk-rat was already surrounded by his chiefs. There was less than usual of the grave talk of North American Indians in that meeting, for the case was urgent.

Nevertheless, there was no bustle, for each bronzed warrior knew that the young men would require a little time to hunt up the trail of the fugitives, mingled as it must be with the innumerable footprints of man and beast in the neighbourhood of a camp; and, until that trail was found, they might as well think calmly, especially as all the men met at the council armed, and ready to vault on the steeds, which were already pawing the earth outside. These horses were restrained by youths who longed for the time when they too might be styled braves, and meet in council.

"Is all prepared?" asked the old chief, as Big Otter entered the tent.

"The young men are out," was the curt reply.

"Good. The night is dark, but my warriors have sharp eyes, and the moon will rise soon. No effort must be spared. The daughter of Weeum the Good must be brought back. It

is not necessary to bring back Attick or his men. Their scalps will do as well."

"Waugh!" pronounced with much stress, showed that the old man's words were not only understood, but thoroughly appreciated.

At this moment occurred the second event which I have said was the cause of surprise in the camp that night, if not of commotion. While the old chief was yet speaking, his words were checked by the sound of horses' hoofs beating heavily on the prairie.

"The young men," said Musk-rat; "they have been swift to find the trail."

"Young men in haste bringing news do not trot," said Big Otter.

"Waugh!" assented the council.

"There are but two riders," muttered the chief, listening intently to the pattering sounds, which rapidly grew louder.

He was right, for, a few seconds later, two horsemen were seen to trot into the camp and make straight for the council fire. Some of the Indians had turned out with arms ready as they approached, but on hearing a word or two from one of the riders, they quietly let them pass.

Pulling up sharply, one of the strangers leaped to the ground, flung his reins to the other, and entered the council tent, where he was received



"ONE OF THE STRANGERS ENTERED THE COUNCIL TENT, WHERE
HE WAS RECEIVED WITH LOOKS OF SURPRISE."

with looks of surprise, and with the cry from Big Otter of the single word "Muxbee!"

After we had looked at each other silently for a few seconds in the council tent, as already described, I advanced to Big Otter, and held out my hand. I then shook hands with the old chief, sat down beside him, and expressed a hope that I did not intrude.

"We palaver about the disappearance of Waboose," said the old chief.

"Disappearance! Waboose!" I exclaimed, turning abruptly to Big Otter.

"Attick has fled," said the Indian sternly, "carrying Waboose and her mother along with him."

"And you sit here idly talking," I exclaimed almost fiercely, as I sprang up.

Before I could take action of any kind, the young Indian Mozwa entered the tent abruptly, and said a few words to Musk-rat. At the same moment the councillors rose.

"We go in pursuit," whispered Big Otter in my ear. "Mount and join us."

A RED-SKIN TRAITOR CHASE.

PART IV.

Almost bewildered, but feeling perfect confidence in my Indian friend, I ran out, and vaulted

into the saddle. Eager and quick though I was, the Red-skins were mounted as soon as myself. No one seemed to give orders, but with one accord they put their horses to the gallop and swept out of the camp. The last words of the old chief as we darted off were—"Bring her back, my braves, and don't forget the scalps of Attick and his men."

"How long is it since you discovered that they were gone?" said I, as I galloped alongside of Big Otter.

"Not more than an hour," he replied.

"Do you think they had a long start before that?"

"I cannot tell. Perhaps two hours, perhaps four. Certainly not five, for they were seen in camp when the sun was high."

I was greatly relieved to learn that they had not got a longer start of us, and very thankful that I had come up in time to join the pursuers.

Although no one, as I have said, seemed to lead the party when we started, I soon found that Big Otter was really our chief. He rode ahead of us, and more than once pulled up to dismount and examine the trail. On these occasions the rest of the party halted without orders and awaited his decision. Once we were completely thrown off the scent. The fugitives

had taken to a wooded tract of country, and it required our utmost caution not to lose the trail.

Presently we came to a small stream and crossed it, but the trail ended abruptly here. We were not surprised, being well aware of the common Indian device of wading in a stream, which holds no footprints, so as to throw pursuers out. Dividing our force, one party went up stream, the other down; but although eager, sharp, and practised eyes examined the banks, they could not discover the spot where the fugitives had again taken to dry land. Returning to the place where we had divided, Big Otter again examined the trail with minute care, going down on his knees to turn over the blades of grass and examine the footprints.

"Strange," said I impatiently, "that so simple a device should baffle us."

As I spoke, the chief arose. "Attick thinks he is wise," he said, in a low voice, "but he has no more brains than a rabbit. He was from childhood an idiot."

Having paid his tribesman this compliment, he remounted, and, to my surprise, went straight back the way we had come.

"What means this?" I asked, unable to restrain my impatience.

"Attick has doubled back, that is all. If there

had been more light we should easily have seen that. We shall soon find the place where the trail breaks off again."

The Indian was right. On clearing the wooded land we found that the moon was up, and we followed the trail easily. Coming to a hillock in the open ground, the top of which was covered with thick and stunted bushes, we rode into them, and there experienced much difficulty in picking our way.

Daylight came and found us still galloping; but as there was no sign of those whom we pursued, and as our horses were getting tired, we halted at a small stream for a short rest and breakfast.

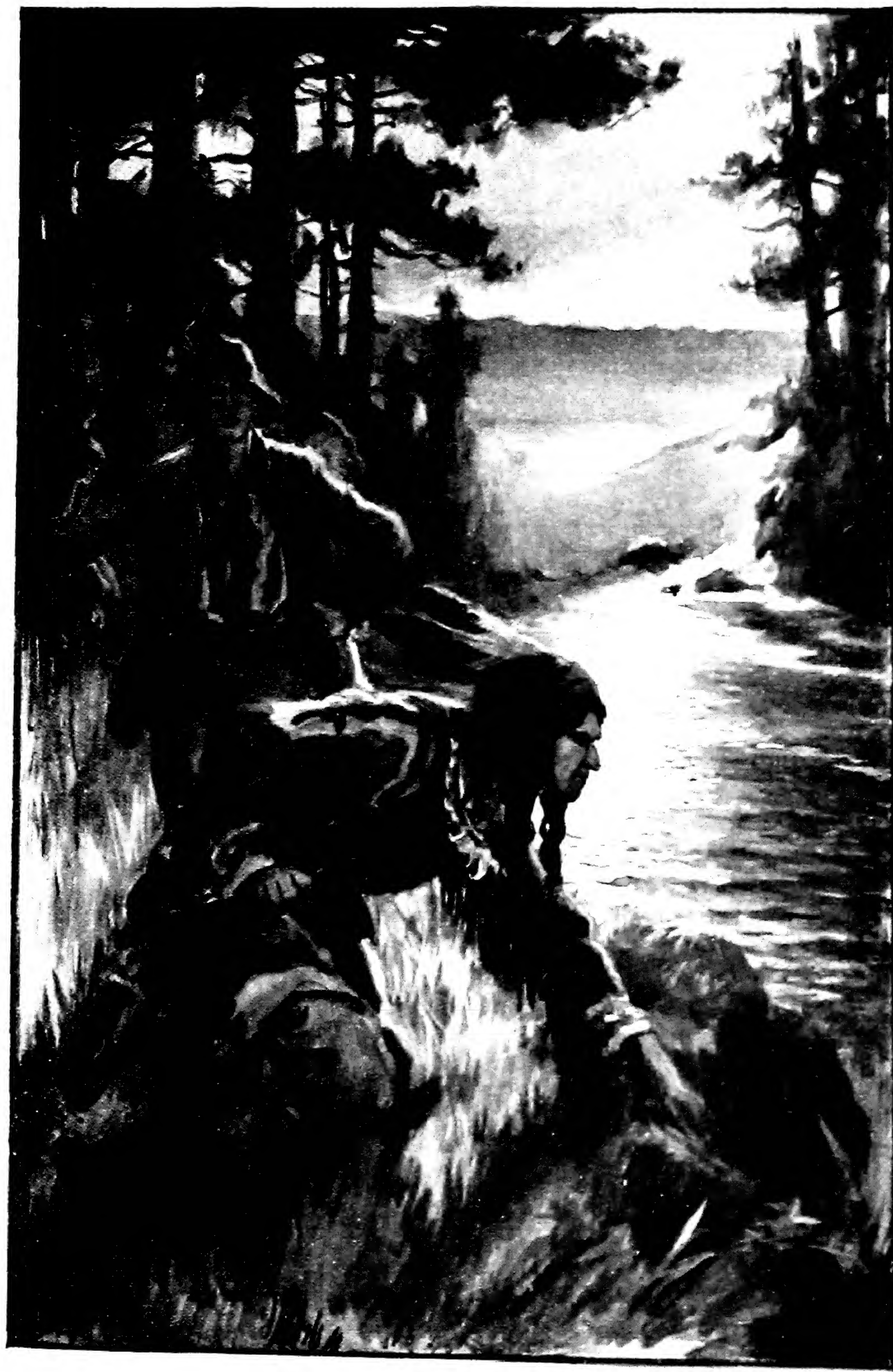
"They must be well mounted," said I, as we sat on the banks of the stream appeasing our hunger with masses of dried buffalo meat, while the horses munched the grass near us.

"Attick is always well mounted," replied Big Otter; "but his men may not be so well off, and women are difficult to urge on when they are unwilling."

"Then you have no doubt that we shall overtake them?" I asked.

"We *must* overtake them," was the sharp reply.

About noon, however, we passed through a strip of woodland, and, on coming out at the



BY OTHEL LLOYD THE TEA



EVERY MAN STEANG FORWARD TO SAVE WAPOOSE FROM ATTICK'S
KNIFE

other side, observed a party of horsemen on the distant horizon.

"Waugh!" exclaimed Big Otter, shaking the reins of his steed and going off at racing speed. We soon began to overhaul the fugitives, and then observed that they were doing their utmost to get away from us.

"It is Attick and his party, is it not?" I asked excitedly.

"It is Attick," was the brief reply.

A RED-SKIN TRAITOR CHASE.

PART V.

Another belt of woodland lay a little to the right on the horizon. The fugitives headed for it. We urged our horses to their utmost speed and soon dashed through the belt of wood, expecting to see the fugitives on the plain beyond. What was our surprise, then, to find them assembled in a group, calmly tying up their horses, and kindling a fire as if for the purpose of cooking their mid-day meal. As most of the men had laid aside their guns, and we outnumbered them by two to one, we checked our headlong course and trotted quietly up to them.

To my great joy, I saw as we approached

that the girl who stooped to kindle the fire was Waboose. Her mother sat on a bank near her, looking very pale and worn.

Attick, who still carried his gun in the hollow of his left arm, expressed well-feigned surprise at seeing us.

"Big Otter seems to be on the war-path," he said, "but I have seen no enemies."

"Big Otter's enemy stands before him," returned our leader sternly. "Attick has been very foolish. Why did he run away with the daughter of Weeum the Good?"

"Attick scorns to run away with a squaw. Waboose agreed to go with him on the hunt. There she is; ask her."

This was a bold stroke of the wily savage. Instead of flying from us, he pretended to have been merely hurrying after a band of buffalo, which was said to be moving southward, and that he had halted in the chase for a short rest and food. This plan he had hastily adopted on perceiving that it was impossible to escape us, having warned Waboose beforehand that he would shoot her dead if she did not support what he said.

But Attick could not understand that fearlessness might dwell in the breast of a woman, and little knew the courage of the daughter of Weeum

the Good. He mistook her silence and her down-cast eyes for signs of yielding, and did not doubt that the delicate-looking and shrinking girl was of much the same spirit as the other women of his tribe.

Great, then, was his astonishment when he saw the Saxon blood in her veins rush to her fair brow, while she gazed at him steadily with her large blue eyes, and said :

“The tongue of Attick is forked. He lies when he says that the daughter of Weeum agreed to follow him. He knows that he carried her from the camp by force against her will.”

Attick had thrown forward and cocked his gun, but happily the girl's unexpected reply, and the indignant gaze of her eyes, caused him to hesitate against his will. This did not allow time for any one to seize the intending murderer, but it enabled me hastily to point my rifle at the villain's head and fire.

I have elsewhere said that my shooting powers were not remarkable; I missed the man altogether, but fortunately the bullet which was meant for his brain found its billet in the stock of his gun, and blew the lock to atoms, thus rendering the weapon useless.

With a fierce shout he dropped the gun, drew

his scalping-knife, and sprang towards Waboose, or—as I had by that time found a pleasure in thinking of her—Eve Liston.

Of course every man of our party sprang forward, but it fell to Salamander to effect the rescue, for that light-hearted and light-limbed individual chanced to be nearest to the savage when I fired at him, and, ere the knife was well drawn, had leaped upon his back with the agility of a panther.

At the same moment Big Otter flung his tomahawk at him. The weapon was well though hastily aimed. It struck the savage full on the forehead, and felled him to the earth.

The rest of Attick's party made no attempt to rescue him. Like all bad men, they were false to each other in the hour of need. They quietly submitted to be disarmed and led away.

R. M. BALLANTYNE.
(*Adapted.*)

THE ARAB TO HIS STEED

MY beautiful ! my beautiful ! that standest meekly by,
With thy proudly arched and glossy neck, and dark and
fiery eye,
Fret not to roam the desert now, with all thy wingèd speed ;
I may not mount on thee again—thou'rt sold, my Arab
steed.

Fret not with that impatient hoof, snuff not the breezy wind,
The farther that thou fliest now, so far am I behind;
The stranger hath thy bridle rein, thy master hath his gold,
Fleet-limbed and beautiful, farewell; thou'rt sold, my
steed, thou'rt sold.

Farewell! those free, untired limbs full many a mile
must roam
To reach the chill and wintry sky which clouds the
stranger's home;
Some other hand, less fond, must now thy corn and bed
prepare,
The silky mane I braided once must be another's care.

The morning sun shall dawn again, but never more with thee
Shall I gallop through the desert paths, where we were
wont to be;
Evening shall darken on the earth, and o'er the sandy plain
Some other steed, with slower step, shall bear me home
again.

Yes, thou must go! the wild, free breeze, the brilliant
sun and sky,
Thy master's house—from all of these my exiled one
must fly.
Thy proud dark eye will grow less proud, thy step become
less fleet,
And vainly shalt thou arch thy neck thy master's hand
to meet.

Only in sleep shall I behold that dark eye glancing bright;
Only in sleep shall hear again that step so firm and light,
And when I raise my dreaming arm to check or cheer
thy speed,
Then must I, starting, wake to feel, thou'rt sold, my
Arab steed!

Ah ! rudely, then, unseen by me, some cruel hand may
 chide,
 Till foam wreaths lie, like crested waves, along thy
 panting side.
 And the rich blood that's in thee swells, in thy indignant
 pain.
 Till careless eyes which rest on thee, may count each
 starting vein.

Will they ill-use thee ? If I thought—but no, it cannot be—
 Thou art so swift, yet easy curbed ; so gentle, yet so free ;
 And yet, if haply, when thou'rt gone, my lonely heart
 should yearn.
 Can the hand which casts thee from it now command thee
 to return ?

Return ! alas, my Arab steed, what shall thy master do,
 When thou, who wast his all of joy, hast vanished from his
 view ?
 When the dim distance cheats mine eye, and through the
 gathering tears,
 Thy bright form, for a moment, like the false mirage
 appears ;

Slow and unmounted shall I roam, with weary step alone,
 Where, with fleet step and joyous bound, thou oft hast
 borne me on.
 And sitting down by that green well, I'll pause and
 sadly think
 'Twas here he bowed his glossy neck when last I saw
 him drink.

When last I saw him drink ! Away ! the fevered dream
 is o'er,
 I could not live a day and know that we should meet
 no more !

They tempted me, my beautiful ! for hunger's power is
strong—

They tempted me, my beautiful ! but I have loved too long.

Who said that I had given thee up ? Who said that thou
wast sold ?

'Tis false !—'tis false, my Arab steed ! I fling them back
their gold !

Thus, thus I leap upon thy back, and scour the distant
plains ;

Away ! who overtakes us now shall claim thee for his pains.

MRS. NORTON.

FIELD AND WILD.

(*From MADAM HOW AND LADY WHY, by Charles Kingsley.*)

PART I.

LET us lie down at the foot of this old oak, and
see what we can see.

And hear what we can hear, too. What is
that humming all round us, now that the noisy
mowing-machine has stopped ?

And as much softer than the noise of mowing-
machine hum, as the machines which make it
are more delicate and more curious. Madam
How is a very skilful workwoman, and has eyes
which see deeper and clearer than all microscopes ;
as you would find, if you tried to see what makes
that " Midsummer hum," of which the haymakers
are so fond, because it promises fair weather.

Why, it is only the gnats and flies.

Only the gnats and flies ? You might study those gnats and flies for your whole life without finding out all—or more than a very little—about them.

I wish I knew how they move those tiny wings of theirs—a thousand times in a second, I dare say, some of them.

I wish I knew how far they know that they are happy—for happy they must be, whether they know it or not. I wish I knew how they live at all. I wish I even knew how many sorts there are humming round us at this moment.

How many kinds ? Three or four ?

More probably thirty or forty round this single tree.

But why should there be so many kinds of living things ? Would not one or two have done just as well ?

Why, indeed ? Why should there not have been only one sort of butterfly, and he only of one colour, a plain brown, or a plain white ?

And why should there be so many sorts of birds, all robbing the garden at once ? Thrushes, and blackbirds, and sparrows, and chaffinches, and greenfinches, and bullfinches, and tomtits.

And there are four kinds of tomtits round here, remember : but we may go on with such talk for ever. Wiser men than we have asked the same question : but Lady Why will not answer them yet

However, there is another question, which Madam How seems inclined to answer just now, which is almost as deep and mysterious.

What?

How all these different kinds of things became different.

Oh, do tell me!

Not I. You must begin at the beginning, before you can end at the end, or even make one step towards the end.

What do you mean?

You must learn the differences between things, before you can find out how those differences came about.

You might as well try to find out how this hay-field was made, without finding out first what the hay is made of.

How the hay-field was made?
Was it not always a hay-field?

Ah, yes; the old story, my child: Was not the earth always just what it is now? Let us see for ourselves whether this was always a hay-field.

How?

Just pick out all the different kinds of plants and flowers you can find round us here. How many do you think there are?



WHITE CLOVER.

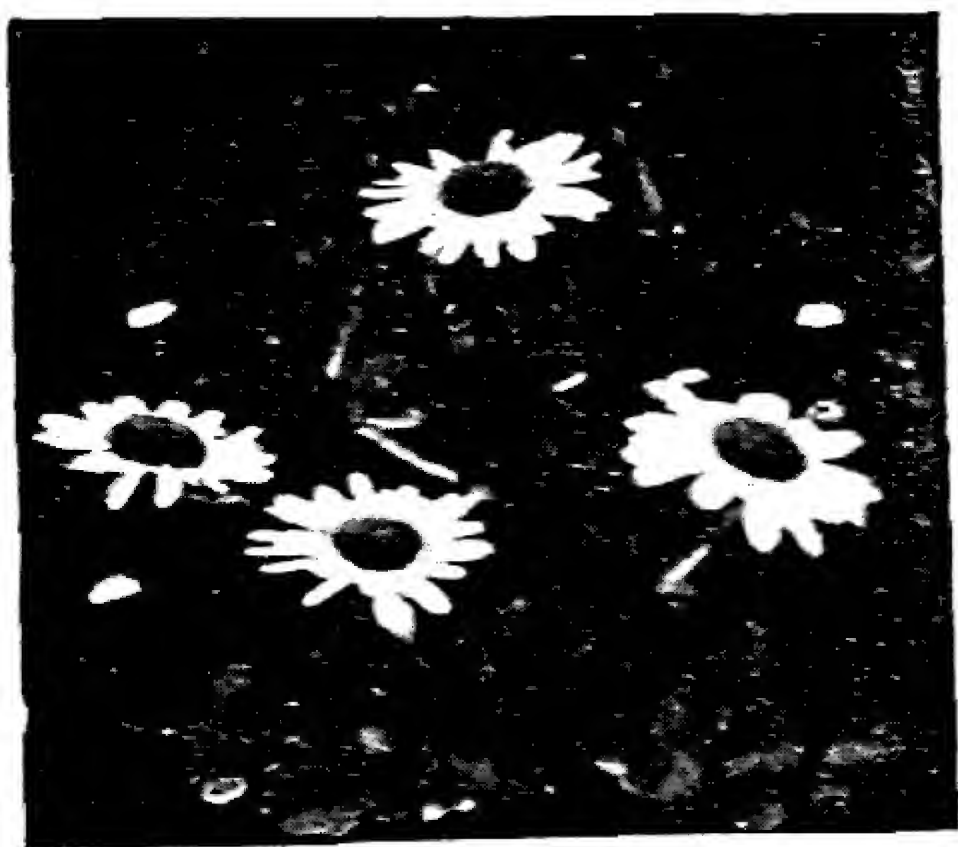
Oh—there seem to be four or five.

Just as there were three or four kinds of flies in the air. Pick them, child, and count. Let us have facts.

How many? What! a dozen already?

Yes—and here is another, and another. Why, I have got I don't know how many.

Why not? Bring them here, and let us see. Nine kinds of grasses, and a rush. Six kinds of clovers and vetches; and besides, dandelion, and



OX-EYE DAISIES.

rattle, and ox-eye, and sorrel, and plantain, and buttercup, and a little stitchwort, and pigmint, and mouse-ear hawkweed, too, which nobody wants.

Why?

Because they are a sign that I am not a good farmer enough, and have not turned my Wild into Field.

What do you mean?

Look outside the boundary fence, at the moors and woods: they are forest, Wild—"Wald," as the Germans would call it. Inside the fence is Field—"Feld," as the Germans would call it. Guess why?

Is it because the trees inside have been felled?

Well, some say so, who know more than I. But now go over the fence, and see how many of these plants you can find on the moor.

Oh, I think I know. I am so often on the moor.

I think you would find more kinds outside than you fancy. But what do you know ?

That beside some short fine grass about the cattle paths, there are hardly any grasses on the moor save deer's hair and glade grass ; and all the rest is heath, and moss, and furze, and fern.

Softly—not all ; you have forgotten the bog plants ; and there are (as I said) many more plants beside on the moor than you fancy. But we will look into that another time. At all events, the plants outside are on the whole quite different from the hay-field.

Of course : that is what makes the field look green and the moor brown.

Not a doubt. They are so different that they look like bits of two different continents. Scrambling over the fence is like scrambling out of Europe into Australia.

Now, how was that difference made ? Think. Don't guess, but think. Why does the rich grass come up to the bank, and yet not spread beyond it ?

I suppose because it cannot get over.

Not get over ? Would not the wind blow the seeds, and the birds carry them ? They do get over, in millions, I don't doubt, every summer.

Then why do they not grow ?

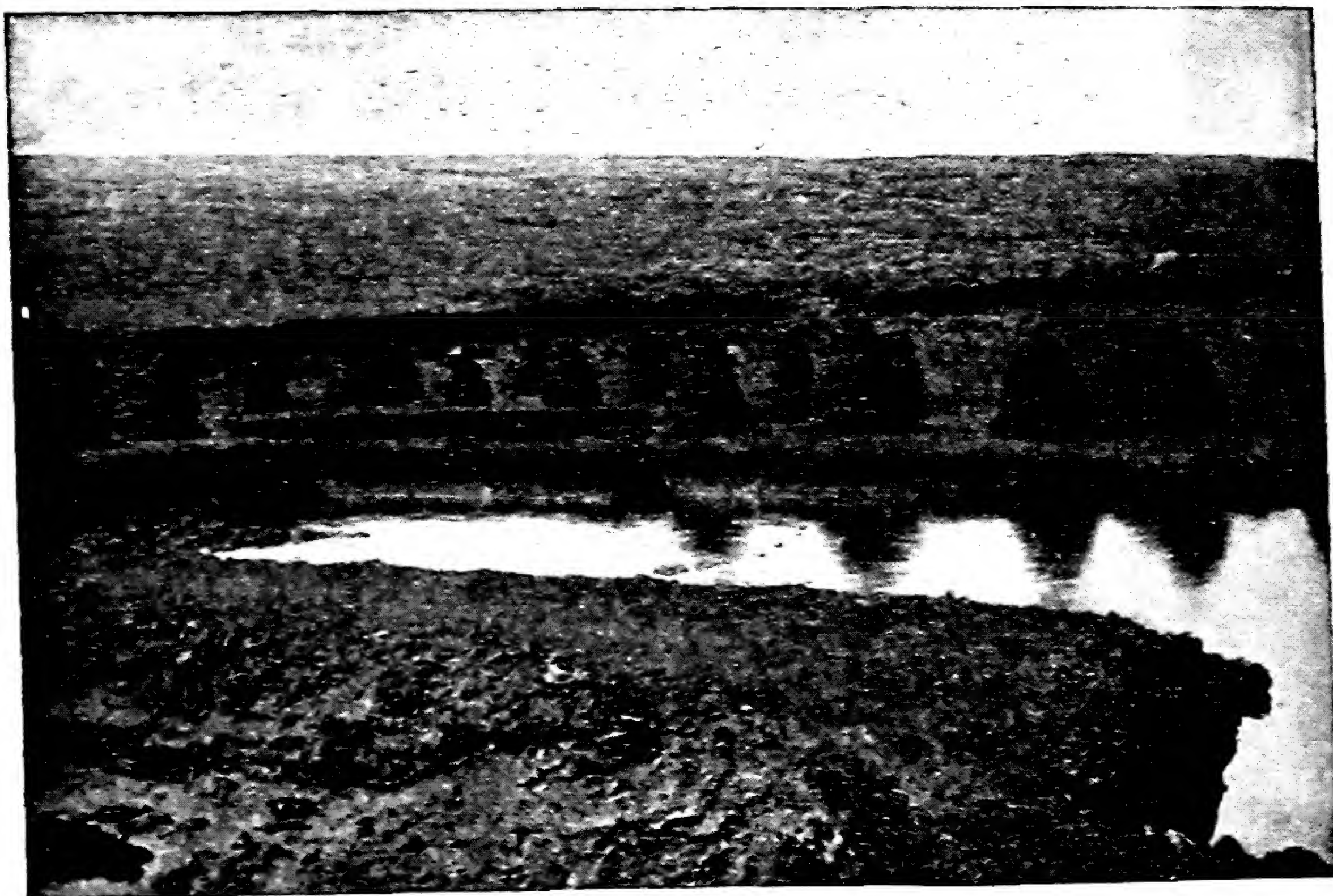
Think.

Is there any difference in the soil inside and out ?

A very good guess. But guesses are no use without facts. Look.

Oh. I remember now. I know now the soil of the field is brown, like the garden ; and the soil of the moor all black and peaty.

Yes. But if you dig down two or three feet, you



PEAT ON THE MOOR.

will find the soils of the moor and the field just the same. So perhaps the top soils were once both alike.

I know.

Well, and what do you think about it now ?

Well, I suppose men must have altered the soil inside the bank.

Well done. But why do you think so?

Because, of course, some one made the bank, and the brown soil only goes up to it.

Well, that is something like common sense. Now you will not say any more, as the cows or the butterflies might, that the hay-field was always there.

FIELD AND WILD.

PART II.

And how did men change the soil?

By tilling it with the plough, to sweeten it, and manuring it, to make it rich.

And then did all these beautiful grasses grow up of themselves?

You ought to know that they most likely did not. You know the new enclosures?

Yes.

Well then, do rich grasses come up on them, now that they are broken up?

Oh no, nothing but groundsel, and a few weeds.

Just what, I dare say, came up here at first. But this land was tilled for corn, for hundreds of years, I believe. And just about one hundred years ago, it was laid down in grass, that is, sown with grass seeds.

And where did men get the grass seeds from?

Ah, that is a long story; and one that shows our

forefathers (though they knew nothing about railroads or electricity) were not such simpletons as some folks think. The way it must have been done was this. Men watched the natural pastures where cattle get fat on the wild grass, as they do in the fens, and many other parts of England.



TURNING THE WILD INTO FIELD—PLOUGHING.

And then they saved the seeds of those fattening wild grasses, and sowed them in fresh spots.

Often they made mistakes. They were careless, and got weeds among the seeds—like the buttercups, which do so much harm to this pasture. Or they sowed on soil which would not suit the seed, and it died.

But at last, after many failures, they have grown

so careful and so clever, that you may send to certain shops, saying what sort of soil yours is, and they will send you just the seeds which will grow there, and no other; and then you have a good pasture for as long as you choose to keep it good.

And how is it kept good?

Look at all those loads of hay, which are being carried off the field. Do you think you can take all that away without putting anything in its place?

Why not?

If I took all the butter out of the churn, what must I do if I want more butter still?

Put more cream in.

So, if I want more grass to grow, I must put on the soil more of what grass is made of.

But the butter doesn't grow, and the grass does.

What does the grass grow in?

The soil.

Yes. Just as the butter grows in the churn. So you must put fresh grass-stuff continually into the soil, as you put fresh cream into the churn.

This field is a truly wonderful place. It is no ugly pile of brick and mortar, with a tall chimney pouring out smoke and evil smells, with unhealthy, haggard people toiling inside. Why do you look surprised?

Because—because nobody ever said it was. You mean a manufactory.

Well, and this hay-field is a manufactory; only,



NEGLECTED GROUND COVERED WITH BUTTERCUPS AND RUSHES.

like most of Madam How's workshops, more beautiful, as well as more crafty, than any manufactory of man's building. It is beautiful to behold, and healthy to work in; a joy and blessing alike to the eye, and the mind, and the body; and yet it is a manufactory.

But a manufactory of what?

Of milk of course, and cows, and sheep, and horses; and of your body and mine—for we shall drink the milk and eat the meat. And therefore it is a flesh and milk manufactory. We must put into it every year yard-stuff, tank-stuff, guano, bones, and anything and everything of that kind, that Madam How may cook it for us into grass, and cook the grass again into milk and meat.

But if we don't give Madam How material to work on, we cannot expect her to work for us. And what do you think will happen then?

She will set to work for herself. The rich grasses will dwindle for want of ammonia (that is, smelling salts) and the rich clovers for want of phosphates (that is, bone-earth): and in their places will come over the bank the old weeds and grass off the moor, which have not room to get in now, because the ground is covered already.

They want no ammonia or phosphates—at all events they have none, and that is why the cattle on the moor never get fat.

So they can live where these rich grasses cannot.
And then they will conquer and thrive ; and the
Field will turn into Wild once more.

FIELD AND WILD.

PART III.

Ah, my child, thank God for your forefathers, when you look over that boundary mark. For the difference between the Field and the Wild is the difference between the old England of Madam How's making, and the new England which she has taught man to make, carrying on what she had only begun and had not time to finish.

That moor is a pattern bit left, to show what the greater part of this land was like for long ages after it had risen out of the sea ; when there was little or nothing on the flat upper moors save heaths, and ling, and club-mosses, and soft gorse, and needle-whin, and creeping willows ; and furze and fern upon the brows ; and in the bottoms oak and ash, beech and alder, hazel and mountain ash, holly and thorn, with here and there an aspen or a buckthorn (berry-bearing alder, as you call it), and everywhere—where he could thrust down his long root, and thrust up his long shoots—that intruding conqueror and insolent tyrant, the bramble. There were sedges and rushes, too, in the bogs,

and coarse grass on the forest pastures—or “leas” as we call them to this day round here—but no real green fields; and, I suspect, very few gay flowers, save in spring the sheets of golden gorse, and in summer the purple heather. Such was old England—or rather, such was this land before it was England; a far sadder, damper, poorer land than now.

For one man or one cow or sheep which could have lived on it then, a hundred can live now. And yet, what it was once, that it might become again—it surely would round here—if this brave English people died out of it, and the land was left to itself once more.

What would happen then, you may guess for yourself, from what you see happen whenever the land is left to itself, as it is in the wood above. In that wood you can still see the grass ridges and furrows, which show that it was once ploughed and sown by man, perhaps as late as the time of Henry the Eighth, when a great deal of poor land, as you will read some day, was thrown out of tillage, to become forest and down once more.

And what is the mount now? A jungle of oak and beech, cherry and holly, young and old all growing up together, with the mountain-ash and bramble and furze coming up so fast beneath them, that we have to cut the paths clear again year by year.



YOUNG ALDERS BY THE BROOK.

Why, even the little cow-wheat, a very old-world plant, which only grows in ancient woods, has found its way back again, I know not whence, and covers the open spaces with its pretty yellow and white flowers.

Man had conquered this mount, you see, from Madam How, hundreds of years ago. And she always lets man conquer her, because Lady Why wishes man to conquer: only he must have a fair fight with Madam How first, and try his strength against hers to the utmost.

So man conquered the wood for a while; and it became cornfield, instead of forest; but he was not strong and wise enough three hundred years ago to keep what he had conquered. And back came Madam How, and took the place into her own hands, and bade the old forest trees and plants come back again, as they would come if they were not stopped year by year, down from the wood, over the pastures—killing the rich grasses as they went, till they met another forest coming up from below.

Another forest coming up from below? Where would it come from?

From where it is now. Come down and look along the brook. What is here?

Seedling alders, and some withies among them.

Very well. You know how we pull these alders up, and cut them down, and yet they continually

come again. Now, if we and all human beings were to leave this pasture for a few hundred years, would not those alders increase into a wood? Would they not kill the grass, and spread right and left, till they met the oaks and beeches coming down the hill? And then would begin a great fight, for years and years, between oak and beech against alder and willow.

But how can trees fight? Could they move or beat each other with their boughs?

Not quite that: though they do beat each other with their boughs, fiercely enough, in a gale of wind. But among these trees in a sheltered valley, the larger and stronger would kill the weaker and smaller by simply overshadowing their tops, and starving their roots, starving them indeed, so much when they grow very thick, that the poor little acorns, and beech mast, and alder seeds would not be able to sprout at all. So they would fight, killing each other's children, till the war ended—I think I can guess how.

How?

The beeches are as dainty as they are beautiful: and they do not like to get their feet wet. So they would venture down the hill only as far as the dry ground lasts, and those who tried to grow any lower would die.

But the oaks are hardy, and do not care much

where they grow. So they would fight their way down into the wet ground among the alders and willows, till they came to where their enemies were so thick and tall, that the acorns as they fell could not sprout in the darkness.

And so you would have at last, along the hill-side, a forest of beech and oak, lower down a forest of oak and alder, and along the stream-side alders and willows only.

*(By kind permission of Messrs.
Macmillan & Co.)*

THE SEA-CAVE.

HARDLY we breathe, although the air be free :
How massively doth awful Nature pile
The living rock, like some cathedral aisle,
Sacred to Silence and the solemn sea.
How that clear pool lies sleeping tranquilly,
And under its glassed waters seems to smile,
With many hues, a mimic grove the while
Of foliage submarine, shrub, flower, and tree.
Beautiful scene, and fitted to allure
The printless footsteps of some sea-born maid,
Who here, with her green tresses disarrayed,
'Mid the clear bath, unfearing and secure,
May sport at noontide in the cavern'd shade—
Cold as the shadow—as the waters pure.

THOMAS DOUBLEDAY.

IN THE SARGASSO SEA.

PART I.

[Young Barclay Stuart and Davie Drake sail on board the good ship *Zingara* under Captain Antonio, and after a number of adventures, which include fights with cannibals, a storm which cripples their vessel, and a mutiny of its crew, drift into the Sargasso Sea or Sea of Seaweed.]

THE *Zingara* was drifting northwards. An attempt was made for several days to steer the vessel by means of boats ahead. This was hard work; yet it might have been successful, and they might in the end have found themselves in the track of ships, had a breeze sprung up.

They appeared, however, to be in a region of calms. In very truth, they were drifting into that great ocean backwater, the Sargasso Sea.

The Sea of Sargasso might be described as a kind of meadow-land of floating weeds, as large at times as half Europe, but often divided into canals that are always opening and closing.

It lies midway in the Atlantic, but well out of the track of ocean steamers, except when it shifts its position to north or south.

Until the unfortunate *Zingara* drifted helplessly into this great lone sea of weed, little was really known of it and its strange inhabitants.

Long, long ago the ships of Columbus passed through some outlying streams of this wonderful Gulf weed, and when they did so, his superstitious sailors began to murmur, and beseech the brave explorer to put back, "for," they said, "God Himself is showing His displeasure at your foolhardiness."

But Columbus had but one motto, and that was, "Advance!"

Many and many a good ship has been entombed in this wondrous sea of weeds, and never got free till one by one the crew died, and there came to them that freedom which comes to us all sooner or later.

It is said to be a smooth and almost motionless basin; but, as will be seen, our heroes did not always find it so.

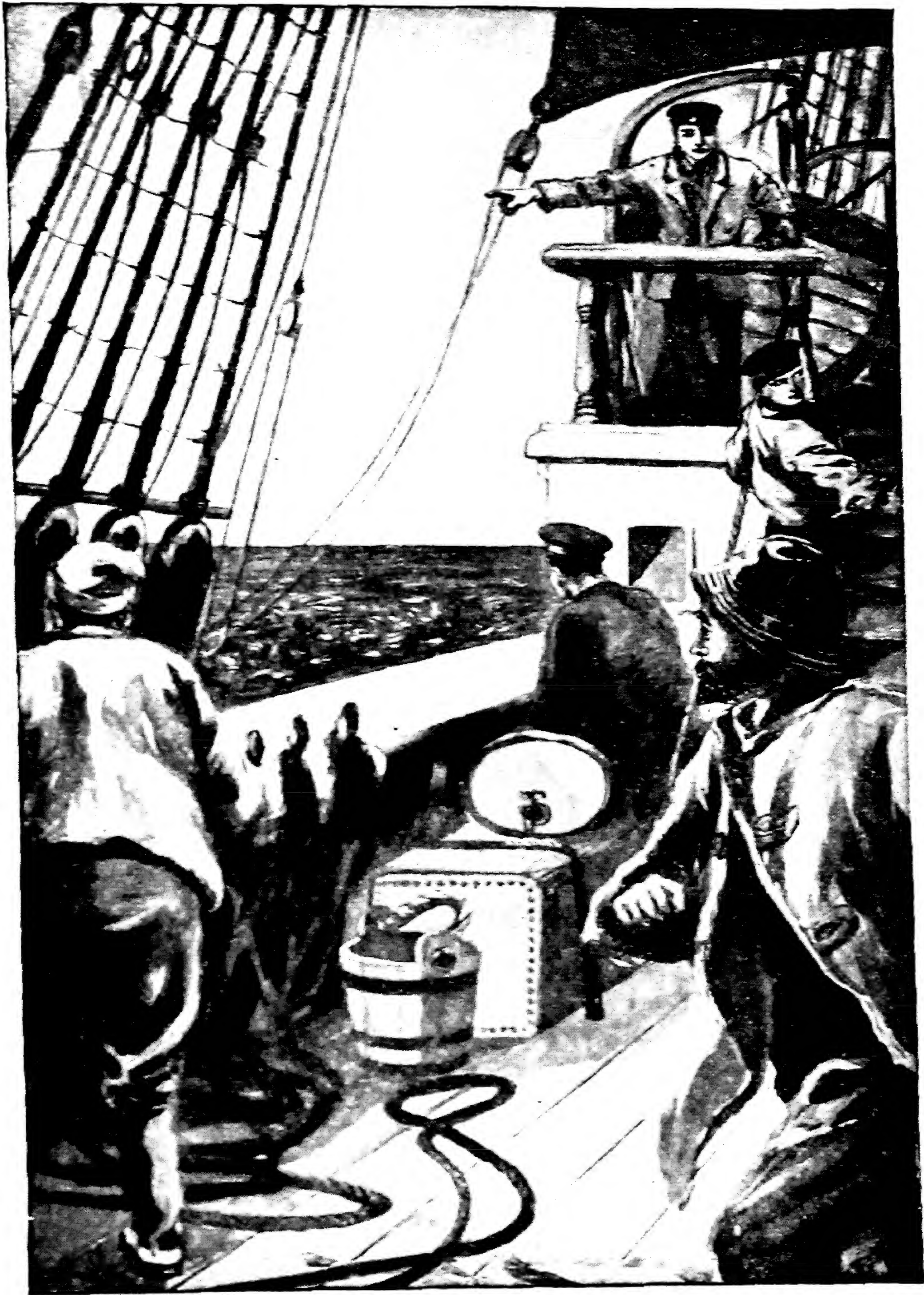
One day a man at the foretop mast-head shouted, "Sea of dark water right ahead, sir."

Antonio and the first mate both went up to have a look.

"That is the terrible Sea of Sargasso," said Antonio. "God alone can help us if we get engulfed in that."

Boats were had out now, and all the afternoon struggled to keep the ship away. But thickest darkness fell, and the boats were hoisted.

They would resume their efforts next day. No sooner, however, did the sun appear than, to their



"TO THEIR HORROR, THEY FOUND THE THICK, DARK SEA OF
WEEDS CLOSING RAPIDLY IN ALL AROUND THEM."

horror, they found the thick, dark sea of weeds closing rapidly in all around them.

The explanation is easy; they had drifted far into a huge gulf or bay, and the horns thereof had now closed up behind them.

“Who enters here leaves hope behind.”

This they well might have said, for by noon there was no blue water to be seen even from the mast-head, nothing but the brown-black sea, close aboard of them the dark, trailing weeds, lifting their folds on the water till it seemed an ocean of great sea-snakes.

It was probably the first time since sailing away from Merry England that our heroes had seen Captain Antonio dull and depressed. He retired to his cabin complaining of not feeling over well, and remained there alone for three long hours.

But at last he roused himself, and walked into the saloon, to all outward appearance his own self again.

“I say, sir,” said Barclay Stuart at last, “it would be interesting to know what we’ve been all thinking about.”

“Well, you begin,” said Antonio, smiling.

“I’ve been thinking that we’ll have a real good quiet time of it for six months in this strange sea, and that Davie Drake and I will by that time be

fit to pass our exams for chief officers, as soon as we get back to Merry England."

It was Davie's watch, and he now retired to walk the deck till midnight, Barclay going with him for company's sake.

The moon, which was but a waning one, had not yet risen, and the night was very dark, for thick black clouds darkened the sky, and seemed to be banked up on all sides and close aboard of the doomed ship.

There was hardly a breath of wind, and the deep silence was almost terrifying. Scarcely did our two boy heroes care to speak above a whisper. Sometimes they paused in their walk, and leant over the bulwark listening.

What did they hear in the darkness? Only this, a strange whispering sound, coming from what direction they could not tell. It was as if that dark and solemn ocean of weeds were trying to tell them its awful story from times long, long forgotten, till the present age.

But presently both started with an almost nervous tremor, for from afar off apparently rose a melancholy wail or shriek. Again and again it was repeated, but finally died away in the distance.

No more weird and mournful wail probably ever broke the silence of the sea. Antonio himself came gliding to their side, and laid a hand on the shoulder of each.

They started and looked quickly round.

“It is Antonio. Don’t be alarmed.”

“But did you not hear those awful wailing screams?”

“Yes, I did, boys, and they are often heard here. They make the bravest men nervous, and sailors say it is the ghosts of men who have entered this strange sea, never, never to leave it more, and whose clay-covered skeletons lie deep in the bottom of the ocean.”

“But you do not believe that, sir?”

“No. I put them down either to wild birds, or to a curious fish found here, called the piping shark. It is said that it appears but for a few minutes above the water, utters those awful sounds, and sinks again into the sea’s dark depths.”

IN THE SARGASSO SEA.

PART II.

For the next few weeks there certainly was activity enough prevailing on board the good ship *Zingara*, all but a wreck though she was—activity displayed not only among the officers, but by all hands, even by the blacks.

Oh, there is nothing like busy-ness for keeping trouble at bay, and sorrow too. Indeed, as soon as a man, young or old, settles down to serious

work, sorrow and worry take the huff and leap straight overboard and drown themselves ; for Care can't bear to see any one industrious and happy.

The mate started the men now to tidy the ship, and they went at it with a will. "She is not much to look at now," said a bluejacket, "without the main and mizzen, but we'll make her as trig as a new piano. Heave round, lads," he shouted, "and trim decks."

"Good!" said Archie Webber, for that was the mate's name; "I think I can leave the men in your hands. I'm going to teach the boys a bit."

"You come up in two hours, sir, and see," said Jack Hodder.

When Archie did come on deck again he found all things sweet and nice, decks scoured and white, ropes coiled, brass and wood-work polished, and the men dressed in their white ducks.

He called Jack Hodder and thanked him; then he cast his eyes aloft, and who should he see in the foretop but Teenie herself, with pussy and the monkeys. How the cat had got up was a mystery, but Muffie was no ordinary puss.

"Oh, come up, come up," she cried excitedly. "Come up, Captain Archie. Some awful, awful beast in the water. Oh, I fear it will swallow up the ship"

Archie hurried up the ratlines, and the sight he saw was really a strange one. Right ahead of the ship was a lake of blue water, in the centre of this brown Sargasso Sea.

About the middle of this piece of open water lay a huge whale half on her side. Archie had been to the Arctic Ocean more than once, and he knew at a glance that this was the "right whale," as Arctic sailors call it.

He sent Teenie down for Antonio. In a few minutes the little man was standing, glass in hand, beside his mate :

"A most interesting discovery," he said, "because it is said that the 'right whale' never visits the Sea of Sargasso. Pah ! we can give fireside philosophers the lie."

"Just watch the dear, affectionate lump of a mother, and the gambols of the great ungainly calf," he continued.

"Sent down here by the husband, I could wager my smoking-cap on that. I think I hear the very conversation that took place away up among the Greenland icebergs before she came away.

" 'Now look here, my dear,' the fond but huge husband said, 'you've been looking rather pale about the snout for a week or two, and Bully (the calf) isn't so frisky as I'd like to see him, so you run right away south to the Sargasso Sea, where you'll find

warm water, sunshine, perfect quiet, and any amount of little fishes to eat among the weeds.'

··· But,' she replied, 'how about my little hubbie? What will he do all alone?'

··· Oh, I'll be all right. Big enough, you know, to take my own part.'

··· But who is to guide me?'

··· Oh, something will—a great Something, that even whales don't understand.'

·· So away went the lady whale, the husband waving his tail to her as long as he could see her. And yonder she is."

"There is money there too," said Archie thoughtfully. "If we could——"

"Stop just right there, mate mine. Not for all the gold in Ophir would I break the peace of Nature by harpooning that innocent brute."

The calf was ploughing round and round his huge and well-pleased mother—round and round, making the water fly in great green seas over her every time he struck it with his tail.

Another strange thing the captain and mate noticed was this: all around the whale and calf flew gulls in hundreds. At so great a distance it was almost impossible to note what they were. Skuas, however, black-headed and white-headed gulls, the pilot-bird, the Greenland "malley," and the beautiful "ivory gull" of Arctic regions were

there. Their united voices filled the air with melody, and broke the stillness of this dark and silent sea.

Frequently they alighted on the whale, and seemed to be pecking at her—a liberty that the leviathan did not seem to object to in the least.



THEY SAW THE CALF PLOUGHING ROUND HIS HUGE MOTHER.

In about half an hour's time, however, the monster got her back uppermost. She lifted one great flipper, the calf seemed to cuddle under it, the huge tail was set in motion, making the sea all round like a boiling cauldron, and then she took a header under the water.

The sound was like the springing of a submarine mine or the bursting of a torpedo, and raised waves that, rolling away in circles on every side, caused even the Zingara for a time to rise and fall on the water and weeds.

IN THE SARGASSO SEA.

PART III.

“What are you so busily engaged at?” said Barclay next day, as he entered the captain’s canvas workshop. Here not only two sailors were busily engaged, but Sister Leona herself.

“We are making a captive balloon,” was the answer.

About a fortnight after this the balloon was completed. A windlass was erected right aft, and to this the long, long rope was attached.

A code of signals was made out, and early one morning Antonio himself made his first ascent to a great height. He had with him many scientific instruments, and one of his best telescopes.

He was more than pleased with the experiment. Afar off to the southward, probably one hundred and odd miles away, he could see the clear blue ocean itself. Oh, how he longed to be afloat therein once more!

But away to the north and the west nothing

was visible but the brown solemn sea, with its dark covering of snaky weeds, that looked like living things as they rose and fell on the gently heaving waves.

“Ah! how many secrets,” he said to himself, “lie buried in this dreary ocean!”

He shuddered a little as he thought how the story of the disappearance of the *Zingara* might never, never be told.

But see, yonder is a hull or hulk in the water many miles to the north. There are the lower masts still sticking up from her decks—one, two, three, and a shattered bowsprit also. Is it possible there could be life on board of that strange wreck?

His attention is next called to more than one fearful-looking apparition that bobs to and fro with a life-like motion among the brown weeds.

Antonio is not without superstition. Can these be sea-serpents? For a moment he believes they are. He turns the glass on the largest. It cannot be much under one hundred feet in length. He can see its very eyes, for the head is raised well above the water, and the neck and back are covered with a black and horrible mane. But reason comes at last to his aid, and he makes them out to be only floating trees.

Relieved now, and not a little hungry as well as

tired—for high up here the air is both cool and bracing—he makes the signal for descent, and soon after is safe once more on his own quarter-deck.

A month after this, Antonio's special boat was ready to launch. It was an ordinary whaler, but strengthened in front with a straight up and down plough-like cutwater high up out of the sea, which divided the weeds and permitted them to fall off astern. The boat was propelled by oars in the ordinary way, but the progress was exceedingly slow, and at no time was a greater rate of speed obtained than two miles an hour.

The boat had three men a side, with Antonio and Barclay astern, and these took turn and turn steering the whaler with an oar, with a species of sculling motion well known to visitors to the far-off Arctic Ocean.

The boat was well provisioned and carried plenty of good water. But although they started soon after daybreak, the sun was gilding the brown ocean before they had accomplished two-thirds of the journey towards the wreck.

There was nothing for it, therefore, but to sup and to sleep till morning. Though there was no moon, the night was charming, and the stars never so bright, and apparently so close that a ship's masts might have touched them,

The silence for the most part was like that of

death. Yet it was broken now and then by mournful, unnatural cries, dying away at last in melancholy tones that touched the heart. These, as I have said before, were put down to the credit of night-birds, or to a fish called by Antonio "the piping shark."

Towards morning something, or rather some creature, struck the bottom of the boat with such violence that she was all but capsized.

She yielded to the blow, else she would doubtless have been stove. No one could even surmise what they had come into collision with, though no doubt it was some species of monster shark. Next day the voyage was resumed. During their slow progress, Barclay had much time to study the weeds that floated close aboard of them, and the myriads of small but active creatures that lived on the surface of this strange mysterious sea.

Towards noon a flock of sea-birds of every description, some entirely unknown even to Antonio, came shrieking and screaming round the boat.

A few minutes after this, they were close alongside one of the most dismal-looking wrecks it has ever been the lot of human eyes to look upon.

Of course no living person or food of any kind was found in the hold, but they took away the ship's compass and some carpenter's tools and a few oars and a boat-hook, and then rowed sadly back to the Zingara.

IN THE SARGASSO SEA.

PART IV.

The people of the unfortunate ship *Zingara* had now lain for more than a year and a half Crusoes in this dreary dark ocean, and food itself began to grow scarce. All that it was possible to do was done in order to eke out the store, by eating such fish and shell-fish as they could find among the weeds.

"I think," said Barclay Stuart one morning, "that Davie and I have thought out a plan of communicating with the outer world which may yet save us."

"Well, dearie, I'm rejoiced to hear it. What is the scheme?"

"You know, sir, that many of the black or white-headed gulls are British birds, and that they will soon perhaps take their departure."

"Yes, they don't build here, and spring—the English spring—will soon be smiling in our own dear country."

"Well, then, Davie and I propose catching those birds by the score and tying to their legs little messages in quills. If only one of all we send off—and we propose sending hundreds—if only one is shot by those murdering 'longshore chaps, it may result in relief coming to us in a few months' time."



THEY CAUGHT MANY OF THE BRITISH GULLS, TO FASTEN
MESSAGES FOR HOME TO THEIR LEGS.

By evening tide on the third day, they had nearly three hundred quills loaded and sealed and ready for their bearers. And before another week was over, they had caught as many of the British gulls and fastened messages for home to their legs; and before another fortnight had passed they saw scores of them flying in the direction of their long-lost country.

The open water near to which the *Zingara* was anchored on the sandbank, or rather bank of clay, was the constant resort of birds of every description, and strange fishes too. More than one whale with calves had come to bask in the sunshine here, and sharks were very common.

Shoals of porpoises, too, would suddenly appear, splashing and dashing, and making the water boil with the motion their gambols excited. They even emitted a kind of cooing sound, but finally they disappeared as suddenly as they had come.

Barclay, with the weed-cutting boat, had forced his way into this strange open lake several times, and marvelled to find that the water was at least ten degrees warmer in the centre than it was around the ship.

He marvelled more one day when all around him, right in the midst of the lake, the water began to bubble. At the same time deep submarine muffled thunders could be heard, and a strong sulphureous gas filled all the air around.

This spot had, no doubt, been at one time an oceanic volcano, and it might burst out at any time.

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One day, while fishing with deep-sea lines in this open lake, Barclay saw the balloon slowly ascend from the ship, with Antonio alone on board.

It passed over the boat, and the captain waved his handkerchief and looked down. He was answered by a heartfelt lusty cheer, for there was not a man now in the boat who did not love and revere their captain.

Barclay was deep in thought, and the men were lying on their oars simply waiting for orders, when suddenly there came a bolt from the blue, as it were. High up in the air a shot seemed to have been fired that shook even the boat. One startled glance upwards revealed the terrible fact that the balloon had burst in mid-air, and was all in rags and tatters, while with startling swiftness down rushed the basket, with Antonio clinging to it.

The balloon must have been fully 1,500 feet high in air when it burst, and it seemed that nothing could save poor Antonio. No wonder that the men's gaze was fastened on the swift-descending wreck.

Barclay clutched the side of the boat and held his breath as if spell-bound, while a strange kind of sickness, born perhaps of this new terror, came creeping over his heart.

Teenie had awoke, and was weeping low to herself. For just a moment Barclay thought he was about to faint. But when at last the wreck struck the sea with a sounding thud, all feeling of fear and sickness was banished as if by magic.

“Give way, lads ; give way,” he cried. “We may at least save the body of our captain from the sharks.”

The men gave way with a will. The wreck of the balloon had fallen within seventy yards of them. It was a race between the boat and the horrid sharks that infested the warm lake. Antonio’s body was floating on its back, and he looked peaceful and asleep. It was saved only just in time.

One of the black men brought the whole weight of a cannibal’s battle-axe club and his own immense strength to bear upon a hammer-headed shark that had sprung from the depths to seize what he took for his lawful prize, and next moment the hideous creature floated dead on the surface of the water.

Two hours afterwards Antonio, to the delight of his watchers, opened his eyes and began to speak feebly. He evidently did not know where he was, however, or what had occurred.

After severe concussion, the patient is seldom, if ever, the same man again. But to draw to a conclusion this story of Antonio’s accident, the captain was his old self two weeks afterwards.

IN THE SARGASSO SEA.

PART V.

A time came at last when death seemed but a measurable distance off—death by starvation.

Already Antonio had found it necessary to place all hands on a diminished allowance, except Teenie and Sister Leona, though the latter could scarcely be prevailed upon to consent to the arrangement.

“Ah, but, dear sister,” said Antonio, “our men may soon fall sick. We depend upon you to nurse them. You must not let yourself sink.”

The coals were nearly all used up by this time. There was still arrowroot left, biscuits, the eggs, and some tinned meat, but nothing else, with the exception of preserved coffee, sugar, and tea, and a few pieces of pork.

For the first time since their imprisonment the great diving lift was swung overboard, and Barclay, who, it must be owned, was chief favourite with Antonio, descended in it to the sea’s dark depths.

These dark depths, however, were speedily illuminated by electric light. Not only so, but a flash-light was turned on, and directed through the great glass window away into the blackness of darkness beyond. The effect was magical.

Not only could they see the sandy bottom clearly,

and make out that it was covered white with the débris of shells that had sunk from aloft, but the strange light attracted towards it small fishes in shoals, of every conceivable kind.

Not only these, but huge sharks and zygaenas, or hammer-headed sharks, came close against the glass, and might have smashed it had not Antonio been prepared to repel these ungainly and terrible would-be boarders. He had placed sharp, strong wires near the sides, and when a shark came too near he touched a button, and though the shock was not enough to kill, it was sufficient to make the monsters fly.

They stopped down for a whole hour on the first day to study natural history. But on the second day they saw a strange sight under the rays of the great flash-light; several enormous sharks were about, and one received a shock.

Unable to imagine what had hurt him, instead of darting away off into the darkness, he turned with all the fury of a tiger on another shark near him.

The combat raged for a quarter of an hour, and was fearful in the extreme, though but dimly seen by those in the lift, owing to the combatants having stirred up the bottom. This cloudiness of the water cleared away at last, and then one of the sharks could be seen lying dead at the bottom of the sea.

The lift was hoisted up. "Pity we couldn't get the dead shark, sir," said Barclay, musingly.

"We have only got to wait a few hours and watch; as gases form in the dead monster, he will float to the surface."

And this was just what occurred. A boat was lowered and the liver secured. The amount of oil extracted was enormous, and would serve as fuel. It was carefully bottled, as a sailor called it, in an air-tight tank.

Many more sharks were taken in the following way.

The lift was lowered, and the flash-light turned on. Then, after giving time for these operations, hooks baited with pieces of pork were lowered. These were almost immediately seized by some powerful tiger of the sea, and soon after he was drawn up, and in-board.

The struggles of such monsters as these were fearful to witness; the snap-snapping of the jaws, and the lashing of the tail, were things to see and hear and remember for ever and a day.

One of the blacks, however, usually settled the business with his battle-axe. Then the shark was opened, and the liver extracted.

But this was not all, for the shark is good to eat. Many sharks were thus caught. And so too were gigantic conger eels, that really looked like sea-

serpents ; cod also, and halibut. So that on the whole, Antonio found now he could once more put the crew on full allowance, and they had sufficient oil to act as fuel for months.

IN THE SARGASSO SEA.

PART VI.

The news that an attempt was now to be made to gain the open water soon spread among the crew, and even those who had begun to ail seemed to regain strength and spirits. There is indeed no medicine in the world like that of hope.

Every one on board the *Zingara* slept sounder than usual that night, and more than one dreamt ere morning that the ship was once more far away from this mysterious and desolate sea, ploughing her way through the blue ocean, all sails set, and homeward bound.

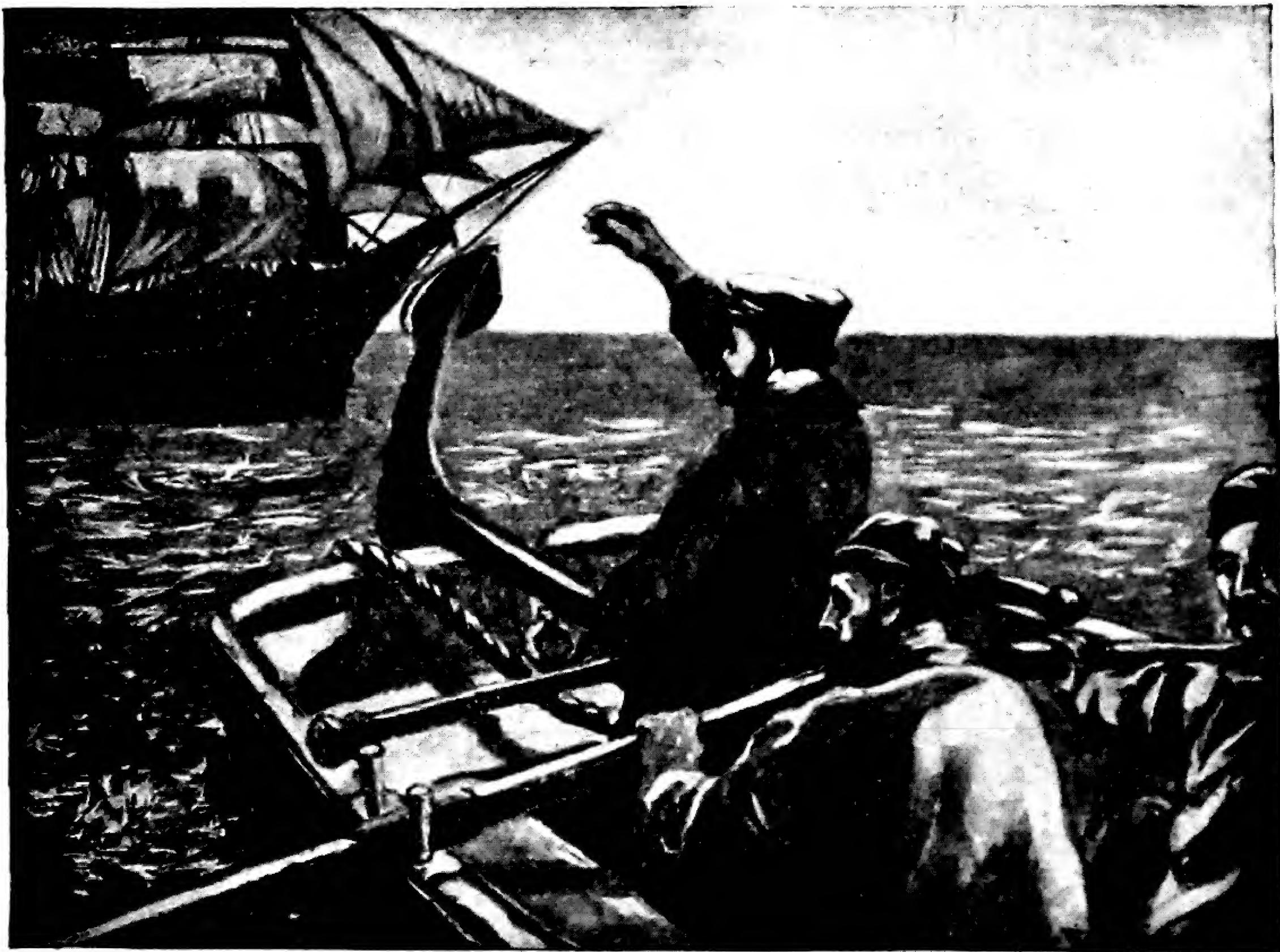
Early next morning Antonio commenced putting his plan into execution.

He called all hands together and addressed them briefly.

“It seems to me, boys,” he said, “that the sand-bank on which we lie extends almost directly south far beyond this Sea of Sargasso, in which we have been Crusoes so long. The soundings that I and my young officer here, Mr. Stuart, have taken,

appear to confirm me in that idea. Well, deep water would spoil my plans, so we must trust we shall keep on the bank.

“Luckily,” he continued, “we have a tremendous length of hawser or hawsers on board. Some of these will need splicing. This must be done at



“THE WEED-PLOUGH BOAT FORGED ITS WAY THROUGH THE WEEDS.”

once. So away with you, lads, and do this work, and reeve a small anchor to one end, attaching the other to the windlass, and then we shall see what we shall see.”

The men worked with such a will, that before noon all was ready. Then the anchor end of the

hawser was loaded into the weed-plough boat, which being well manned, began at once to forge its way through the weeds directly south.

Meanwhile the main anchor was got up. The hawser was paid out almost to the end. Then Antonio hailed the boat through his speaking-trumpet.

“Let go the hawser anchor.”

For just a moment hope trembled in the balance. But, oh joy! as the men on board bent on to the winch and turned it round, it was found that the anchor end held fast, and the ship herself began to move slowly seawards.

Antonio and the officers worked as hard, if not harder, than the crew did. But now came Sabbath, and rest. They were working for dear life itself, it is true, yet Antonio believed that ill-luck would follow if they did not refrain from work on Sunday.

Monday morning saw them hard at it again. And lo! on the evening of that day, with a delight that was beyond telling, they beheld the blue open water not ten miles away.

In three days more, being still above the sand-bank, they found themselves at anchor beyond and clear away from Sargasso, that mysterious and silent sea.

DR. GORDON STABLES

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